

A
History of
Armenian Literature

**From Ancient Times
to the Nineteenth Century**

By Srbouhi Hairapetian



CARAVAN BOOKS
DELMAR, NEW YORK
1995

Originally published in 1986 as
Hay hin yev mijnadarian grakanutian patmutiun

English translation published 1995

First Printing 1995

English translation
© 1995 Academic Resources Corporation
All rights reserved

Printed and made in the United States of America

*Grateful acknowledgment is made to the
Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America
for assistance in the translation of this work.*

- ∞ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements
of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—
Permanence of Paper for Publications and Documents
in Libraries and Archives ANSI/NISO/Z39.48—1992.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hayrapetean, S. P. (Srbuhi Pōghosi)

[Hay grakanut'ean patmut'iwn. English.]

A history of Armenian literature /
by Srbouhi Hairapetian.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-88206-059-7

1. Armenian literature—History and criticism.

PK8505.H3913 1995

891'.99209—dc20

94-5789

CIP

IN MEMORY OF
ANGÈLE AND VAHRAM SUKYAS

Contents

Preface 7

Introduction 11

Transliteration Key 16

PART I: Literature of the Ancient Period (Beginning to Tenth Century)

1. The Armenian People, Language, and Mythology 19
2. Armenian Folk Literature 36
 - First Epic Series 41
 - Second Epic Series 50
 - The Persian War 63
3. Creation of the Armenian Alphabet: Mesrop Mashtots 66
4. The Hellenizing School and Religious Literature 78
 - The Hellenizing School 82
 - Martyrologies and Hagiographies 91
 - Doctrinal Literature 100
5. Armenian Historiography in the Fifth Century:
Beginning and Zenith of the Classical Period 103
 - Koriun 105
 - Agathangeghos 108
 - Pavstos Buzand 114
 - Ghazar Parpetsi 123
 - Yeghishe 127
 - Movses Khorenatsi 139

6. Historiography and Philosophy of the Post-Classical Period:
Fifth to Eighth Centuries 159

- Sebeos 160
- Movses Kaghankatvatsi 164
- Davtak Kertogh 166
- Hovhan Mamikonian 168
- Zenob Glak 168
- Ghevond Vardapet 169
- Paruir Haikazn 171
- Yeznik Koghbatsi 172
- Davit Anhaght 173
- Anania Shirakatsi 174

7. Sacred Music: *Sharakans* 176

- Mesrop Mashtots 182
- Sahak Partev 186
- Movses Khorenatsi 186
- Hovhannes Mandakuni 188
- Komitas 189
- Sahak Dzoraporetsi 192
- Hovhan Odznetsi 193
- Stepanos Siunetsi 193
- Sahakdukht 194
- Petros Getadardz 195
- Grigor Pahlavuni 196
- Hovhannes Imastaser 196
- Khachatur Taronatsi 197
- Nerses Shnorhali 198
- Nerses Lambronatsi 206
- Grigor Skevratsi 208
- Hakob Klayetsi 208
- Hovhannes Pluz Yerznkatsi 208
- Vardan Vardapet 209
- Kirakos Yerznkatsi 209

PART II: Medieval Literature (Tenth to Seventeenth Centuries)

8. Armenian Literature in the Tenth to Fourteenth Centuries 215
 - Grigor Magistros 221
 - Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi 224
 - Tovma Artzruni 226
 - Anonymous Historian 227
 - Aristakes Lastiverttsi 228
 - Matteos Urhayetsi 231
 - Smbat Sparapet 233
 - Kirakos Gandzaketsi 234
 - Vardan Areveltsi 234
 - Hovhannes Sarkavag 235
9. Grigor Narekatsi 238
 - Odes 241
 - Book of Lamentations 247
10. Nerses Shnorhali 264
11. The Armenian Folk Epic: *David of Sasun* 282
12. Medieval Armenian Prose 298
 - Tales 299
 - Hagiographic Literature 302
 - Colophons 306
 - Translations 307
 - Fables 307
 - Mkhitar Gosh 309
 - Vardan Aigektsi 314
13. Armenian Culture in the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries 321
 - Unitores 322
 - Yesayi Nchetsi 327
 - Hovhannes Vorotnetsi 327
 - Grigor Tatevatsi 328
 - Amirdovlat Amasiatsi 330

Stepanos Orbelian 330

Tovma Metzopetsi 330

14. Medieval Lamentations (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries) 332

Grigor IV Tgha 335

Stepanos Orbelian 337

Khachatur Kecharetsi 338

Arakel Siunetsi 342

Arakel Baghishetsi 346

Abraham Ankiuratsi 351

15. Medieval Verse (Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries) 353

Metrics 360

Hovhanes Yerznkatsi 367

Frik 373

Kostandin Yerznkatsi 384

Hovhannes Tlkurantsi 401

Mkrtich Naghash 414

Grigoris Aghtamartsi 419

PART III: Literature of Restoration
(Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries)

16. Armenian Literature in the Seventeenth Century 439

17. Medieval Folk Songs 462

Hairens 469

18. Bardic Lyricism 486

Naghash Hovnatan 489

Sayat-Nova 497

19. Armenian Poetry in the Eighteenth Century 513

Paghtasar Dpir 514

Petros Ghapantsi 518

20. Armenian Culture in the Eighteenth Century:
The Mkhitarist Order 524
Mkhitar Sebastatsi 525

Conclusion 534

Notes 536

Bibliography 603

Index 632

Preface

The present volume is a survey of more than fourteen hundred years of Armenian literature from the creation of the Armenian alphabet in the fifth century A.D. to the literature of the eighteenth century. A discussion of the Armenian oral tradition of literature from the period preceding the use of the Armenian alphabet is also discussed. In addition to the literary aspects, Armenian culture and history are examined in the context of the development of the literature.

This study, based on the latest research in the field, introduces the reader to the main genres and periods of Armenian literature. Significant contributions of individual authors are analyzed along with excerpts from their works.

This is the story of the literary life of Armenia, as well as that of Armenian literature outside of the homeland, as exemplified by the production of the Mkhitarist monks of Venice. There is no similar work, in either Armenian or English, presenting such a comprehensive view of the history of Armenian literature.

The publication of the Armenian edition of this work (Los Angeles, 1986; Beirut, 1988; and Yerevan, 1994) received widespread acceptance. The English translation has been prepared to fill the needs of thousands of Armenians in the Diaspora and to acquaint a wider non-Armenian-speaking readership here and abroad with the beauty of Armenian literature. I hope that through this book the English-speaking public here and abroad will be introduced to the literary heritage and culture of the Armenian people.

The translation of such a literary history is not an ordinary venture. Rendering the complete literary heritage of a culture from the original into another language is no easy task, especially when dealing with the complexities of the original ancient Armenian language, *grabar*. The translation was, in fact, an immense undertaking, beginning with the difficulty of converting the Armenian into English and continuing through the arduous work of editing. For this reason, as far as was possible, prose

8 Preface

and verse excerpts already existing in English translations were used. Together with the translation and editing, the English text also differs from the Armenian in that

1) Various errata and omissions of the Armenian editions have been corrected and verified.

2) Additional works published in English have been given in the notes and bibliography.

3) English translations of the titles of articles, books, and other works follow the transliterated originals.

4) Notes for each chapter are provided at the end of the book rather than at the end of each chapter, so that they will not interrupt the presentation of the text.

5) Names of authors who lived and wrote up to the eighteenth century are cited in the index with the first name first, followed by the last name (e.g., *Movses Khorenatsi*, and not *Khorenatsi, Movses*.).

6) The Armenian to English transliteration system utilized is the Translation Key of *The Armenian Review*. No diacritical marks have been used, while author and place names have been rendered as pronounced in Armenian (e.g., *Khorenatsi*, and not *of Khoren*).

Each work, when translated into another language, nearly always assumes a new look. The reader may judge the authenticity of the rendering of the original.

I owe a word of gratitude to a group of individuals, whose assistance and constant endeavors made the translation and publication of this study a reality. First I would like to mention the names of my translators: Ralph Setian (Chapters 1, 2 [section 1]), Thomas Samuclian (Introduction, Chapters 2 [sections 2 and 3], 8, 9, 10, 12, and 14), Arsiné Arakelian (Chapter 3), Aram Arkun (Chapters 4, 6, 11, and 13), Levon Megerian (Chapter 5 [Koriun and Agathangeghos]), Alice Fudukian (Chapter 5 [Pavstos Buzant, Ghazar Parpetsi, Yeghishe, and Movses Khorenatsi]), Robert Bedrossian (Chapter 7), Yervant Kotchounian (Chapters 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and Conclusion), and Hovhannes Bezazian, who participated in editorial tasks.

I have a special word of thanks to editors Barlow Der Mugrdechian of California State University, Fresno, and Yervant Kotchounian for their diligent work. In this respect, I would like to note Mr. Kotchounian's invaluable contribution, from numerous issues of translating, editing, and verification, to final proofreading of the text,

without which the preparation of the volume for translation and publication would have been very difficult.

I also deeply appreciate the assistance of Professor Robert W. Thomson of the University of Oxford and Penny Mirigian-Emerzian of Fresno, California, who read the draft of the translation and, making valuable remarks, ensured that the book was published within the appropriate linguistic and scientific norms.

I cannot fail to express my admiration and gratitude to Norman Mangouni, the publisher of Caravan Books, for his conscientious, enthusiastic, and dedicated efforts on behalf of the book.

I would also like to mention with deep emotion the name of my husband, Don Acton, whose love and encouragement inspired and motivated me to attend resolutely to this years-long project.

Finally, I address my expression of indebtedness to the initiator of this whole venture, Archbishop Datev Sarkissian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy of North America, who with heroic efforts was able to procure the financial support for the costly translation of this armenological study, in the persons of Jack and Christine Sukyas, honorable patriots who magnanimously assumed the expenses in memory of their parents.

SRBOUHI HAIRAPETIAN
Monterey, California

Introduction

Ancient and medieval Armenian literary history is the main subject of this book, which analyzes and evaluates the literature of these periods. This literary output was produced in ages past by different writers and is the product of specific times and places. Such a legacy, having been created in ancient times and preserved to this day, not only represents the Armenian literary past but also continues to endure and demonstrate the strength and vitality of its treasures.

Grigor Narekatsi died nearly a thousand years ago in a mountain cave, yet his *Book of Lamentations* has endured the vicissitudes of time, and from every one of its lines the spirit of the author flows forth endlessly, undiminished by the passage of centuries. For eight hundred years Nerses Shnorhali's hymns have enriched the services of the Armenian Church. The pagan hymn to Vahagn, thousands of years old, is recited to the present day.

Thus every literary fragment that has reached us says much about its value. It reminds us of the literary tastes, concepts, and burning issues of times past. In Mesrop Mashtots's day, the cultural and linguistic salvation of the Armenian people was the prime issue; therefore, after invention of the Armenian alphabet, a group of historians in the fifth century immortalized the early history of Armenia. In the tenth century when Narekatsi lived, it was the individual who emerged with his own ideas and feelings towards God and the world; the *douceur de vivre* or enjoyment of life is reflected in Armenian poetry of the late Middle Ages. Yet later, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, national and political issues assumed importance. Each age brought forth its philosophy, world view, and values. That philosophy sprang from conditions in which the people lived—including some foreign influences. And, just as the people's life was shaped by the political and social situation and mentality of the times so, too, were the literary forms and contents which writers of the earlier period employed.

Different social classes in different historical periods created their own literature and philosophy. Members of the clergy, literate and

possessing a high level of national consciousness, wrote for their peers. Ultimately, it was the clergy who created ancient and medieval Armenian literature. The clerical class was concerned not only with defending the Armenian national religion, but also with the task of creating Armenian literature, writing history, philosophy, and memoirs. Other preoccupations of the clergy included refining the language, writing hagiographies, and producing patristic and exegetical works.

In contrast, the common people spun tales and epics, songs, fables, and riddles. The troubadours who appeared in ancient and medieval Armenia established a poetic tradition with secular values. Thus, political and economic life, through the various classes it produced, manifested its ideas, tastes, and styles, which in one way or another were reflected in literature—be it historiography, hymns, or secular songs. All these developments form a long and cohesive chain, every link of which marks an important transitional stage in the history of Armenian literature.

The purpose of this work is to present past literary values, authors, the language utilized, and literary forms in which the writers expressed their thoughts, concepts, and ideas, from the beginning to the eighteenth century. Currently, there is no textbook of this scope available in English which can serve as an outline for students, guide for researchers, or a ready reference work for the general public, providing information about Armenian literature. Moreover, this volume on literature is at the same time, to some extent, a history of Armenian philosophy, science, language, culture, politics, and economics. One point, however, must be emphasized at the outset. Only those literary achievements which have been especially significant and influential for all Armenian literature have been included in this work. Our aim was not to give a detailed account, mentioning the name of every writer or work in chronological order. Neither was it to analyze every historical or literary period in equal depth. While the literature of the Classical period is treated comprehensively in this work, many medieval authors who have contributed in one way or another to Armenian literature and language but have written after the tenth century are mentioned only briefly, since they fall outside the scope and purpose of this study.

Our conception and understanding of the past owe a great deal to the historical method which rejects the narrow classic formulas and raises the necessity of researching every pertinent literary phenomenon.

Nevertheless, as history itself has been marked by important socio-political events and upheavals, so too has it made it possible to study those literary works which have had an influence not only in their time but also have had an enduring aesthetic and ideological impact on future generations. It is this guiding principle of literary history that has led us in the writing of this book.

In view of the extensive period covered by our study, it has been divided into three principal parts. Part One, "Literature of the Ancient Period," starts with ancient folklore and goes up to literature of the tenth century. The literature of this period is basically in prose form and is religious or historical in content: historical studies, hymns, hagiographies, dogmatic and exegetical works, written in Classical Armenian (*grabar*).

Part Two, "Medieval Literature," traverses the tenth to seventeenth centuries. The nature of literature undergoes a change in this period. Man and the world become the foci of art. Verse is predominant. Medieval secular odes, parables, riddles, epics, and memoirs characterize this period. The language is mainly Middle Armenian.

Part Three, "Literature of Restoration," spans the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This is a transitional period representing the preliminary stage in the development of modern Armenian literature.

In all three periods the object under investigation is Armenian literature—the study of material with artistic merit. Our approach to the Classical period is somewhat different, because that section includes nearly all significant works from ancient Armenian literary output and not only those with artistic merit. The term "Classical Armenian literature" includes not only purely aesthetic works—such as tales, fables, fairy tales, and poetry—but also the works of fifth-century historians, hymns, hagiography, dogmatic works, and translations. This legacy from the dawn of Armenian national literature was first and foremost a literary product, consisting of works about Armenian intellectual and political history, which shaped literary tastes and formed the basis for the subsequent rise of artistic thought and literature as an art form. Furthermore, such works contributed to development of the Armenian language and stylistics. In many instances they exhibited such aesthetic concerns in their composition that we are justified in considering them of prime importance in the development of Armenian

literature, which in the Middle Ages would emerge with purely literary genres.

Within each period we have found it suitable to present the material not in strict chronological order but rather organized according to the nature of the literature. Therefore, such periodization has chapters and subsections devoted to either genres or chronology or different authors. Nevertheless, the total embrace of the material is presented on the whole in chronological order. Each historical period is treated individually in its political and social context in order to facilitate the examination of values and the succession of ideas, styles, and language. The individual writers, their creations, the literary ties, the influences they have borne, and the similarities and contrasts of their works all appear against this general background.

Separate chapters are devoted to those authors who are pivotal figures—those who more than other writers have successfully expressed various stages of the development of national literary talent. This has been done in order to make it possible to understand the writer's environment, since, in the voice of the individual author, we hear those deep harmonies which characterize the quality and uniqueness of the author's legacy.

Historical and chronological arrangement of materials is not sufficient in itself. Since we are dealing with the past, we must approach literature not with the aesthetic concepts of our era but with those of the times in which the works were written. For that reason, we have focused on the social and cultural context which to some degree affected the author's world view. In this connection it is often difficult to penetrate the depths of history. There still remain many unresolved problems in ancient and medieval Armenian literature which cause difficulties in linking together the whole chain of literary development.

Of course, many issues, figures, and problems fell outside the scope of our study. The history of Armenian literature, together with the legacy of folklore, has made a journey of over two thousand years in which various political, cultural, and economic factors have played an important role. Therefore, the study emphasizes only those literary achievements which have had an influence on the development of Armenian literature in various historical periods. Numerous historical, philosophical, religious, and cultural issues and phenomena have been

left out of this study. Of these, only the ones which have played a significant role in ancient and medieval literature have been highlighted.

This volume does not purport to be a comprehensive work. Our purpose was neither to conduct an in-depth investigation nor to propose new scientific theories in connection with each literary theme. Our work is a synthesis of the studies which have been produced in the field of ancient and medieval Armenian literature, upon which we have selectively drawn.

At the end of the book there is an index of names and a bibliography which provides the reader with the works consulted and supplementary sources for each chapter. We hope that the bibliography will serve as a preliminary guide in assisting researchers.

This book is designed for students of Armenian studies in the Diaspora as well as all those who are interested in familiarizing themselves with the treasures of ancient and medieval Armenian literature.

Transliteration Key

The *Armenian Review* Transliteration Key is based on the phonetic values of Eastern and Classical Armenian and omits the use of diacritics.

The transliteration of proper names may vary from the system by following widely accepted usage.

The transliteration of diphthongs is also specified.

Ա	ա	a	Ծ	ծ	tz	Ձ	զ	j
Բ	բ	b	Կ	կ	k	Ռ	ռ	r
Գ	գ	g	Հ	հ	h	Ս	ս	s
Դ	դ	d	Ձ	ձ	dz	Վ	վ	v
Ե	ե	e, ye ¹	Ղ	ղ	gh	Տ	տ	t
Զ	զ	z	Ճ	ճ	ch	Ր	ր	r
Է	է	e	Մ	մ	m	Յ	յ	ts
Ը	ը	e	Յ	յ	y, h ^{1,2}	Ի	ի	v
Թ	թ	t	Ն	ն	n	Փ	փ	p
Ժ	ժ	zh	Շ	շ	sh	Բ	բ	k
Ի	ի	I	Ո	ո	o, vo ¹	Օ	օ	o
Լ	լ	l	Չ	չ	ch	Ֆ	ֆ	f
Խ	խ	kh	Պ	պ	p			
ու	u, v ³		յու	iu ⁵				
ույ	ui, oy ³ , o ²		եա	ia, ya ⁶				
այ	ai, ay ³ , a ²		յա	ia ⁵ , ya ^{5,6}				
իւ	iu, iv ⁴							

1. In the initial position only.
2. The letter յ is not transliterated in the final position.
3. When followed by a vowel.
4. In the final position or when followed by a vowel.
5. In current Republic of Armenia orthography.
6. When preceded by a vowel.

Part I

Literature of the Ancient Period (Beginning to Tenth Century)

1. The Armenian People, Language, and Mythology

The Armenian Plateau is situated in the northeastern part of Asia Minor. At the present time, this area is inhabited by Turks, Kurds, Yezidis, Assyrians, and very few Armenians. In this land, for millennia on end, the descendants of Haik, forefather of the Armenian people, have lived from the time of Noah down to the first genocide of the twentieth century. Today, historic Armenia is deprived of its rightful masters and is almost entirely under the domination of Turkey. Only a small section in the northeastern part of the country—one-tenth of historical Armenia—is presently populated by, and under the control of, Armenians. Also, a number of regions which were once part of historical Armenia are now within the territory of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Iran.

History and geopolitics often have treated Armenians harshly. It is clear, however, that these people born in the Armenian Plateau—which occupies an area of more than three hundred thousand square kilometers (116,000 square miles)—even though diminished in land and population, continue to struggle, live, and thrive. Mount Ararat, which does not even fall within the borders of present-day Armenia, serves as the symbol of this people. The mountain serves as an inspiration to Armenians dispersed throughout the world, as an embodiment of nationhood and survival. Their state being the first in the world to adopt Christianity as its religion (in 301), Armenians have tenaciously clung to their Church, language, and literary heritage. They have not only endured the vagaries of history but continue to march along the pathways of civilization, forging a rich culture which testifies to their creative genius as a unique nation.

* * *

The origins of the Armenian people have not yet been entirely clarified. Historical sources do not provide any definite information,

although legends and folk tales, as well as archaeology and paleography, fill this gap to a certain extent. According to the most recent findings, the birthplace of the original Indo-European language was not that expanse of land falling to the north or west of the Black Sea in Europe but rather the eastern parts of Asia Minor—the Armenian Plateau, northern Mesopotamia, and the northwestern limits of the Iranian Plateau.¹ It was from this location that in the fifth to fourth millennia B.C., Indo-European tribes began to migrate to Europe, Central Asia, and India, while the Armenians, Hittites, Greeks, and Iranians remained in this area. Thus, from this viewpoint, a certain credence may be given to Movses Khorenatsi's genealogical assumption concerning Armenians. He claimed that the forefather of the Armenian people was Haik, and that the name *Armen* is to be linked with that of Aram, son of Haik.²

A significant number of Armenologists, among them Suren Yeremian and Grigor Ghapantsian, assert that the derivation of the name *Hai* is from *Hayasa* (Khayasha), which appears in various Hittite inscriptions as the name of a country which played an important role in the Armenian Plateau during the second millennium B.C.³ According to this thesis, it was on the basis of the name *Hayasa* that Armenians came to call themselves *Hai* (-asa being a Hittite suffix) and their country *Hayastan* which is known by others as *Armenia*. A certain part of this country, the provinces of Greater Haik and Lesser Haik, is referred to as the *House of Torgom* in the Bible.

The earliest information about Armenians dates from the second half of the third millennium B.C. in Akkadian and Hittite inscriptions, wherein the name of the ruler of the Mesopotamian kingdom of Akkad, Naram-Sin (2290-54), is mentioned as the conqueror of *Armani*.⁴ There are references to Armenia in the works of Greek historians Herodotus (fifth century B.C.), Xenophon (fifth century B.C.), and Strabo (first century of the Christian Era).⁵ Strabo considered Thessaly as the birthplace of Armenians. In general, Greek sources and traditions state that Armenians came from elsewhere and then settled in what is now known as the Armenian Plateau. Thus, historiography has come to the conclusion that toward the end of the second millennium B.C., Thracian and Phrygian tribes emigrated from the Balkans into Asia Minor, establishing themselves in the Armenian Plateau.

Comparative linguistics, recent epigraphic scholarship, and historical discoveries call into question the theory of nonautochthonous

origin of Hai-Armens. They affirm that Armenians were an indigenous people whose homeland had been the Armenian Plateau from earliest times. The latest research suggests that during the second and first millennia B.C., and perhaps even long before that, various Armenian tribes lived in the Armenian Plateau, although they were referred to by different names. Even as far back as the Assyro-Babylonian periods, Nayirian tribes existed which were considered to be indigenous to the Armenian Plateau. As scions of a volcanic land, they worshipped fire and the sun and organized themselves into various tribal groupings.⁶ These Armenian groupings reached a high level of political and cultural organization and cohesiveness during the ninth through sixth centuries under the Urartian Empire. The latter is mentioned under different names in the Old Testament and in Greek, Persian, and Assyrian historical sources and inscriptions. In Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions it is known as *Urartu* or *Nayiri*, in the Bible as the *Land of Ararat* (2 Kings 19:37, Isaiah 37:38, Jeremiah 51:27), in Akkadian records as *Urashtu*, in Old Persian as *Armina*, and in Elamite as *Harminuya*. On the oldest map of the world (sixth century B.C.), it is mentioned under the name of *Armenia* by Hecataeus of Miletus. After the fall of the Urartian Empire in the sixth century B.C., Armenians established the kingdom of Yervandunis. From the sixth century down to the middle of the fourth century B.C., Armenia was under the yoke of Achaemenid Persia. When the Achaemenid dynasty was overthrown by Alexander of Macedonia, Armenia regained its independence in the latter part of the fourth century. Soon it fell under the domination of the Seleucids and was divided up into three large administrative regions: Greater Armenia, Lesser Armenia, and Sophene (Tzopk). Of these the most powerful was Greater Armenia where in 189 B.C. Artashes I established the Artashesian kingdom that survived until the first century B.C. This period is noteworthy for the fortification of the Armenian state, the expansion of the boundaries of the kingdom, and the consolidation of the population. These factors significantly contributed to the creation of a single unifying Armenian language, attested to by Strabo.⁷ During the reigns of Artashes I (180-160 B.C.), Tigran II (95-55 B.C.) his grandson, and Artavazd II (55-34 B.C.), the Artashesian dynasty gained international recognition. Especially during the ascendancy of Tigran II (the Great), the country expanded its borders, reaching from the Caspian to the Mediterranean Seas and extending from the mountains of Media

to the western banks of the Euphrates River, thus becoming one of the most powerful states of the Near East.

* * *

As a result of its particular geographical location, Armenia has continuously been, since time immemorial, a battleground between Europe and Asia. In ancient times Armenia was caught between warring empires such as the Roman and the Persian; during the Middle Ages, between the Byzantines and the Arabs; and later between various Christian and Muslim countries. Indeed, the history of Armenia is an endless series of protracted wars waged for the sake of national self-preservation. On the crossroads between the Occident and the Orient, Armenia has always incited a passion for plunder among nearby and distant states; and, it has been fought over by the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Seljuks, Mongols, and Turks. Constant war and political instability have left a mark upon the character and national identity of Armenians. Like other nationalities, Armenians have their own particular personality traits, ways of living and thinking, and specific ethnic characteristics distinguishing them from other peoples. Harsh living conditions as well as precarious geopolitical fortunes have shaped their personality, endowing them with tenacity, industriousness, and instinctive conservatism. Their endless search for independence and freedom, their respect for traditional values, their ever-diligent and inquiring intellect, and other elements in the psychological make-up of Armenians have enabled them to struggle pertinaciously against their enemies and oppressors. Due in large measure to this stability of character and purpose, they have survived against overwhelming odds. The bedrock of their faith, the Armenian Apostolic Church from the fourth century onwards, has been a bulwark of resistance to religious, ethnic, and linguistic assimilation. The ability to emulate and to adapt to new situations, which is a quality common to small nationalities, is a particularly outstanding characteristic of Armenians. The best evidence for this is the influence of Hellenistic culture upon Armenians, which remained strong all the way down to the fifteenth century. Greek culture presented itself as a source of an inexhaustible legacy of scholarship and literature which Armenians attempted to acquire through great efforts. They translated numerous works from Greek into Armenian, striving

more to adapt to their own needs than merely to imitate. It is beyond any doubt that these human and ethnic characteristics, which are an expression and a consequence of environmental and historical factors, have shaped the content of Armenian literature.

* * *

The formation of the Armenian language, which belongs to the Indo-European group of languages (see the works of Heinrich Petermann, Friedrich Müller, Friedrich Windischmann, Frantz Bopp, Heinrich Hübschmann, Hrachia Acharian, and Georg Jahukian), took place in parallel to the formation of the Armenian people. Comparative-historical linguistics in the nineteenth to twentieth centuries has demonstrated that Armenian is an independent linguistic branch of the Indo-European family of languages and does not belong to the Iranian linguistic branch.⁸ Subsequent linguistic and ethnographic research has shown that, on the basis of the analyses of old and new dialects, Armenian is to be placed within the Hittite-Luwian group of Indo-European languages. The Armenian language, which was refined over thousands of years, was influenced by the Hurrian, Indo-European, and Caucasian languages of the region. Armenian is also related to the Iranian, Greek, and Slavic languages. During the age of Hellenistic cultural pre-eminence, Armenian had already become a developed language. By the time of the Artashesian dynasty (from the second century B.C. to the first century of the Christian era), Armenian served as a vehicle for presentation of plays. Songs were also composed in the vernacular, and pagan religious rites were conducted in Armenian. All the way down to the fifth century when the Armenian alphabet was invented, the Armenian language developed a rich oral tradition through native creation and borrowing. And, this accounts for the fact that after invention of the alphabet in the fifth century intellectual masterpieces of the Greeks were translated into early Classical Armenian, marking the emergence of a rich, polished, and flexible language.

Research continues to be done in Armenian linguistics to determine the relationships between the Armenian language and cuneiform and hieroglyphic inscriptions considered Urartian (see the works of Ghapantsian, Acharian, Jahukian, Igor M. Diakonov, Hübschmann, and Antoine Meillet). Scholars agree in general that

Urartian cuneiform belongs to the Indo-European linguistic family. Furthermore, the Armenian and Urartian languages have influenced each other. "The evidence for Urartu having borrowed from Armenian is proof of the fact that Armenian tribal groups played a major role in the Urartian state, and there was substantial mutual influence exercised. This explains, on the one hand, the rather rapid process of assimilation of the people of Urartu by the Armenians; and, on the other, the fact that in the sixth century B.C. the same country was called both *Urartu* and *Armina*."⁹ According to some other scholars, Urartu was a kingdom comprised of Armenian tribes. The language of Urartian cuneiform writings was a Hurrian dialect used by Nayirian tribes as a written language. Martiros Gavukchian does not consider cuneiform Urartian to have been a spoken language since he states:

During those two decades, from the time of the fall of the Urartian Empire (590-585 B.C.) to the emergence of Yervand I's kingdom (570 B.C.), the demographic composition of Urartu had not changed. There had not been a sufficiently large and powerful influx of foreigners to effect a change of language in the country (in any case archaeologists agree that no new and different stratum can be seen over the Urartian cultural stratum). If at that time the language had changed, then it must have been imposed by new rulers (Medes or Persians), while Armenian is neither the language of the Medes nor that of the Persians. Therefore, it must be admitted that the language of the native population, the Armenian-speaking Nayirian peoples, was preserved.¹⁰

Gavukchian considers Urartu, also known as *Armina* in the sixth century B.C., the land of Indo-European speaking Armenians who had established themselves there since ancient times.

The origin and developmental process of the Armenian language reflects changes in the history of the Armenian people. Numerous proto-Armenian tribal dialects fused to enrich Armenian with new phonological and grammatical nuances and vocabulary. Changing political circumstances and fortunes, as well as borrowings from Hittite, Assyrian, Iranian, and other languages of Asia Minor, have left their mark upon Armenian, shaping and enriching it. Hellenic and Roman

influences introduced Greek vocabulary into Armenian, which was quite evident chiefly during the period of Byzantine rule. Many scholars have attempted to clarify the relationships that exist between Armenian and other languages of Asia Minor (Hittite, Luwian, and Palaic).¹¹ These scientists have established affinities and ties between Armenian and Hittite, particularly in vocabulary, grammar, and phonology. The Persians, a neighboring people in immediate contact with Armenians, have left their influence not only on the language but also on the customs and mores of the Armenian people. Literary historian Manuk Abeghian writes:

Even from the time of Xenophon at the end of the fifth century B.C., the Persian language was comprehensible to Armenians. Iranian influence existed not only until the period of Macedonian domination but also later during interaction with the Medes and Persians. It was even more evident during the rule of the Arshakuni dynasty and to a relatively lesser extent during Sassanid rule.¹²

Persian linguistic influence, which was conditioned by the age-old proximity of the two peoples and by long years of subjection to the Persians, began to weaken after Armenians converted to Christianity. "Christianity came to alienate Armenians from the Persians; Armenians became increasingly separated from them in religion and language, but many customs and political structures remained Persian."¹³ The linguist Hrachia Acharian, examining in detail in his *History of the Armenian Language* the borrowing into Armenian from Old and Middle Persian, arrives at a figure of 1,405 loanwords taken from Persian. According to most recent studies, the actual number of loanwords from Old and Middle Persian (Parthian Pahlavi) is even greater than that.

Besides Persian, other languages spoken in Armenia included Syriac and Greek. In an effort to weaken the influence of Greek culture and language upon Armenians, Persia forbade the teaching of Greek in schools and encouraged the use of Syriac, which became the official language of the Church in the eastern part of the country. And, this state of affairs continued until the fifth century up to the invention of the Armenian alphabet by Mesrop Mashtots. Just as Armenian was influenced by Indo-European languages, so too was it subjected to the

influence of different non-Indo-European languages, such as Hebrew, Assyrian, and Arabic. These are reflected not only in early inscriptions but also in numerous loanwords which relate to their religions, cultures, and daily life. According to Acharian, a total of twelve hundred words entered Armenian from ancient Semitic languages. Studies by Acharian, Grigor Khalatians, Joseph Karst, and Ghapantsian indicate that those borrowings took place during ancient times (in the second and first millennia B.C.) when various Armenian tribes were continually involved in commercial, cultural, and other types of relations with different Semitic tribes. The presence of these linguistic strata in Armenian are derived from Assyro-Babylonian (Akkadian) languages, known as Old Semitic. The Assyrians, who were descendants of the Aramaeans, were called Syrian after accepting Christianity. Losing their identity, they were partially assimilated by Armenians. This facilitated the spread of their culture and the influence of their language upon Armenians. The first work translated into Armenian was the Syriac version of the Proverbs of Solomon, followed by the rest of the Bible, and other works. But before long, writes Acharian, "the spread of Armenian literature and the Armenian written language forever banished the use of Syriac and any taste for it."¹⁴ The Syriac element was gradually absorbed into Armenian, introducing many Syriac words into the latter.

Thus, Armenian, which had begun to take shape thousands of years earlier, during the Artashesian period acquired the status of an official national language as well as a common vehicle of communication. Armenian, like any other language, has had branches and dialects which along with their peculiarities have many things in common. In those regions which had official or administrative roles, such as the plain of Ararat, local dialects were subjected to the dominant language, losing their special characteristics as they were cultivated and perfected, rising to the level of a literary language.

The history of the written word on the Armenian Plateau begins with the Akkadian, Hittite, and Urartian cuneiform inscriptions.¹⁵ Also in this area are numerous epigraphs on stone: rock pictures, symbols, inscriptions in Aramaic, Greek, and Latin. When the Assyro-Babylonian inscriptions were deciphered in the middle of the nineteenth century, scholars from all over the world also attempted—successfully—to decipher the Urartian cuneiform writings. Many European and Armenian orientalists such as Archibald Sayce, Karl F. Lehmann-Haupt,

Nikoghayos Mar, Mikhail V. Nikolovski, Hovsep A. Orbeli, and Ghapantsian played an important role in this enterprise.

About five hundred of these cuneiform writings have been found in various parts of Armenia. They are inscribed on rocks, cliffs, clay tablets, edifices, and other objects. These inscriptions chronicle the military campaigns and conquests of Urartian kings and recount such things as their construction projects and their religious beliefs. These cuneiform records, written from left to right, without word spacing or special lineation, are made up of about one hundred syllabics and ideographs. They are similar to each other in style, written in dry and tedious language. Those inscriptions which are related to religious beliefs and the gods are more vivid in language and express the imagination and conceptions of the people of those times. An inscription from the Lake Urmia area by Rusa I is worth quoting for its aesthetic qualities:

Rusa, son of Sarduri, says: Urzana, king of the city of Ardin, appeared before me. I took upon myself the responsibility of supplying provisions for his entire army. On the occasion of this charity, by the will of the god Khaldi, I built temples to the gods on the high road, in commemoration of the benefaction of Rusa. I appointed Urzana governor of the region and set him up in the city of Ardin.

In the same year I, Rusa, son of Sarduri, came to the city of Ardin. Urzana placed me on the high throne of his royal forebears. . . . In the temple of the gods, in my presence, Urzana made a sacrifice before the gods. At that time I built for the god Khaldi, the lord, a dwelling for his divinity, a temple with gates.

Urzana supplied me with a supporting army . . . war chariots, whatever he had. I took his supporting army and, by the will of the god Khaldi, I, Rusa, went into the mountains of Assyria. There I carried out a massacre. After that Urzana held my hand, I took care of him. . . . I seated him in his place as master so he might rule. The people of Ardin were present for this. The sacrifice which I carried out I dedicated entirely to the city of Ardin. I organized a celebration for the inhabitants of the city of Ardin; then I returned to my country.

I, Rusa, servant of the god Khaldi, faithful shepherd of his people, with the aid of the god Khaldi and through the power of his army, had no fear of battle. The god Khaldi during the whole course of my life has given me authority and happiness. I governed the land of Biaini and overcame the lands of my enemies. The gods gave me long days of happiness. . . . After all of this . . . peace was established.

Whoever obliterates this inscription, whoever breaks it, whoever does such a thing, may the god Khaldi, Teisheba, Shivini, and all the other gods destroy him, his progeny, and his name.¹⁶

It is not entirely clear whether Armenians had a written language of their own before the fifth century. According to Armenian historian Movses Khorenatsi, the use of Urartian cuneiform inscriptions was discontinued by the sixth century B.C. During the pagan period, however, Armenians had produced numerous hieratic works which have not survived. These were destroyed when Christianity was introduced to Armenia. In the absence of a written Armenian language, the liturgical language used in church became either Greek or Syriac. The existence of a hieratic literature dealing with royal, religious, and historical topics has raised questions (Ashot G. Abrahamian and Edvard B. Aghayan) about whether there might also have been a system of hieroglyphs used during pagan times.¹⁷ It is presumed that, as in Egypt, any such system of hieratic symbols would not have been for general use. They would have been employed solely for recording religious or hieratic annals, while for more secular writings Armenians would have utilized Greek, Persian, or Aramaic letters.¹⁸ Aramaic, a language belonging to the Semitic family, became a common vehicle of communication in the eighth century B.C. in Assyria and throughout most of the Near East. It was considered the second official language of Achaemenid Persia, surviving all the way down to the Arab invasions. Indeed, Aramaic epigraphs written in the second century B.C. that make mention of the Armenian king Artashes I have been discovered in Armenia.¹⁹

* * *

During the period of Macedonian rule (fourth century B.C.), East and West became much closer economically, politically, and culturally. In these interactions the East played a more active role than the West, resulting in the rise of the cultural and economic centers of Alexandria, Antioch, and Pergamum at the expense of Athens.²⁰ Hellenism, as a unique blend of oriental and Greek politics and culture, blossomed in the aforementioned cities and moved toward the East. It expanded into the countries of the Mediterranean basin, the Near and Middle East and was a dominant force for about three hundred years, from the third to the first century B.C.

During the time of the Artashesian dynasty, from 189 to the first century B.C., Armenia became politically more stable. The economic and political relations between East and West contributed to consolidation of the Armenian state, social stratification, the rise of slavery, and political-cultural progress in larger cities. These cities were built along trade routes and were inhabited chiefly by merchants and artisans. Trade was carried out for the most part along two main roads. One was the Black Sea-India route, which passed through the northern part of the country, and the other was the one that linked the Far East with countries of the northern Mediterranean and passed through the south. Greek modes of commerce and Greek political traditions penetrated the cities of Armenia along these routes. Cities such as Yervandashat, Yeriza, Artashat, and Tigranakert became thriving Hellenistic centers where colonnaded buildings in a new architectural style multiplied. These included palaces, temples, bath houses, and aqueducts. Among the cities mentioned above, Artashat was the most famous. Founded in the province of Airarat by Artashes I (around 180 B.C.) and situated at the confluence of the Arax and Metzamor rivers, Artashat was the city through which caravans passed on the Black Sea-India route. Artashat was renowned for its natural beauty and for its magnificent edifices. Plutarch called it "the Carthage of Armenia."²¹ The establishment of Macedonian rule in the East also brought with it the accomplishments of Greek literature, culture, science, and philosophy. Beginning in the third century B.C., particularly during the Artashesian period, Greek language, art, and mythology penetrated Armenia, blending with local traditions and creating an Armenian Hellenistic

culture. The official language of the court and the government in Hellenistic Armenia was Greek. Coins, stone inscriptions, and Greek historians of the period attest to this phenomenon. Indeed, the ascendancy of the Greek language facilitated the perusal of works by Greek writers and contributed to the spread of Greek culture in Armenia.

According to inscriptions found at Armavir, works of the famous Greek writers, Hesiod (seventh century B.C.) and Euripides (480-406 B.C.), were well known in the Yervanduni court as early as the third century B.C.²² It is noteworthy that even Armenian coins bore inscriptions in Greek along with images of Armenian kings such as "King Tigran the Hellenophile" or "King Tigran the Great, Armenophile and Hellenophile." During the second and first centuries B.C., theater occupied a special place in the Armenian cities of Tigranakert and Artashat. Greek tragedies were staged there, often with the participation of Greek actors, as well as presentations of troubadours.²³ Charles Rollin writes in his *Histoire romaine* that the city of Tigranakert had "many comedians, musicians, and dancers during theatrical performances" and that it "was filled with marvelous sights and sculptures by outstanding masters."²⁴ According to Plutarch, the theater in Hellenistic Armenia was accessible to all social classes, being open not only to the aristocracy but also to audiences of the lower classes. Archaeological excavations have revealed various objects which testify to the popularity and high level of the dramatic arts in Armenia such as articles decorated with theatrical scenes.

In addition to the Hellenistic theater, folk theaters whose programs included tragedies and comedies, accompanied by music, and the participation of singers and dancers were very active in most cities. As attested to by Plutarch, in 53 B.C., on the occasion of the victory over Crassus, *The Bacchanantes* by Euripides was presented in Artashat.²⁵ It is known that the son of Tigran the Great, Artavazd II (first century B.C.), "composed tragedies and wrote orations and historical works of which a few have survived."²⁶

The blossoming of Armeno-Hellenistic culture in Armenia, chiefly in the areas of art and literature, attracted the attention of Greek artists and philosophers who went to Armenia and found a broad base for their activities in an agreeable and supportive environment. During those years, in the court of Tigran II, there lived the famous Greek rhetorician and writer Amphilochus of Athens, who had been exiled from

his native city, and also the philosopher and historian Metrodorus of Skepsia, who was a Pontian government official as well as Tigran's court historian.²⁷ Both Amphicrates of Athens and Metrodorus of Skepsia wrote of the life and deeds of Tigran II, but unfortunately their books have been lost.

During the first century B.C., Olympius the Priest wrote the work *Mehenakan patmutiun* (Temple History) which gives an account of the politics of kings Yervand IV and Artashes I, domestic events, and the construction of temples and of the city of Artashat. This book, which has not survived, served later as a historical source for the noted fifth-century historian Movses Khorenatsi, along with another work in verse known as *Hiusumn pitoyits* (Collectanea of Useful Facts) or *Pitoyits girk* (Book of Useful Facts or Book of Chreiai). Movses Khorenatsi called its author "the wisest of the wise." *Pitoyits girk*, translated from Greek, is considered to be one of the oldest courses in examples of folkloric and rhetorical work. Its translator is thought to have been Khorenatsi.

* * *

The "primitive world view" of the Armenian people gave birth to mythological deities in honor of which they built temples, sanctuaries, and monuments. The mythological conceptions of Armenians were not very different from those of other nations, particularly from the mythological conceptions of neighboring Iranian and Semitic peoples. The worship of gods, which had religious and moral dimensions, was expressed through elements of nature and ethical concepts such as good and evil, the beautiful and the ugly, and so on. Worship began with various beliefs and rituals: the propitiation of spirits, prayers, incantations, totemic practices, and nature worship. These mysteries—with their sacred rites, savior-gods, and promises of an afterlife, with their myths of water, the sun, and fertility, and with their Babylonian, Persian, and Indian influences—promoted the emergence of a rather rich assemblage of Armenian mythological figures. At the same time, Armenian mythology began to change due to contacts with the Near East and ancient civilizations. Vestiges of that lost mythological legacy may be found today in the remnants of pagan temples and monuments from the ancient world, gold and silver objects, decorated floors and walls, and weapons.

Thanks to Homer and Hesiod, Greek mythology was preserved; whereas, only a few fragments from Armenian mythology are remembered, having been recorded at a later period by Armenian scribes.²⁸ In the Armenian pantheon the oldest and greatest god was considered to be Haik, who is also known as patriarch of the Armenians. He was the god of power, protection, and war; and, it was after him that his descendants were called *Haikazunk* (born of Haik or sons of Haik) and the country *Haik*, *Hayots ashkharh* (Land of the Armenians) or *Hayastan*.²⁹

Among the ancient gods were also the well-known figures Ara, a symbol of beauty and sagacity; Vahagn, representing the sun; Tork, the embodiment of strength and courage; and the Assyrian Shamiram (Semiramis), goddess of love and fertility. Numerous places in Armenia continue to carry their names—plains, mountains, provinces, districts, and monuments such as canals and temples. Among ancient Armenians some also worshipped Tzovinar, the goddess of water, sea, and rain as well as the sun, the moon, stars, and holy trees.

In conjunction with ancient pagan gods, a new Armenian pantheon was created (fourth and third centuries B.C.), which during the period of Achaemenid rule in Armenia was partially subjected to Iranian influence. Aramazd, Vahagn, Mihr, Tir, Anahit, Astghik, and Nane had their special roles embodying certain qualities in man and nature and were related to one another by blood. During the centuries of Hellenic influence, the Armenian pantheon came to be modeled after the Greek, and each god received an appropriate Hellenic name in addition to its Armenian one. Aramazd was father of the gods and their overlord, much like the Greek Zeus, Roman Jupiter, Hindu Indra, and Persian Ahura Mazda. He created the earth and sky and was the symbol of abundance. Aramazd had three children—Anahit, goddess of fertility; Nane, goddess of sanctity; and Mihr, god of fire.³⁰ The high altar to Aramazd was located in Greater Armenia, in the province of Daranaghik, in the fortress of Ani. His name was celebrated on New Year's Day. On that occasion animals with white skin were sacrificed; joyful games and contests took place for the duration of the month of Navasard, the first month of the year of the pagan Armenian calendar.

Mihr, the son of Aramazd, was god of the sun, whose worship was widespread as early as the second millennium B.C. in the land of the Mittani, India, and later in the Achaemenid world. He symbolized truth,

purity, and light. Of the Zoroastrian gods, it was Mihr (Mithras) who enjoyed great popularity and recognition in the Roman Empire. The birthday of Mihr was celebrated by Roman emperors on December 25. In the fourth century this date was adopted to mark the birthday of Christ. The worship of Mihr existed in Armenia from the very earliest centuries, and his name was celebrated in the month of Areg (sun). In Iran, where this month was called Mithra or Mihr, Zoroastrians would perform their special fire ritual (*athrakana*). Armenians, on the other hand, called that holy day of ritual *Tiarn end araj* (the presentation of our Lord to the Temple) and celebrated it on February 13. The month of March was called *Mehenakan* by Armenians. The word *mehian*, which denotes a non-Christian temple in Armenian, also comes from the name Mihr. The *mehian* had its origin in the Old Iranian word *maithryana* (Mihr's place); and, as a religious temple, it took on a greater significance during the period of the Arshakunis.³¹ The names of two of the heroes of the Armenian folk epic, Great Mher or Lion Mher and Little Mher, are also derived from the name Mihr. The former character is a symbol of heroism and courage, while the latter represents the savior of the world. Mithraism, the worship of Mihr, took shape in the ancient world as a religious philosophy. It eventually spread into India, Iran, the countries of Asia Minor, Greece, and the Roman Empire.

The idea of a mother goddess, common throughout the Near East, was exemplified by the goddess Anahit in Armenia, who was also known by different names such as Anea, Aneid, and Ani. She was similar to the Greek Artemis, Roman Diana, Persian Anahita, Hindu Niadia, and Egyptian Niit. The worship of Anahit was widespread among peoples of the East. In Armenia she was goddess of virtue, prudence, and fertility. Also worshipped as goddess of war in earlier centuries, Anahit was the most loved and venerated goddess of the pagan period. As Strabo observed, "All of the deities of the Persians are also worshipped by the Medes and Armenians, but the devotion towards Anahit by Armenians surpasses all others."³² Anahit also bore the epithets "*Golden Mother*," "*Golden One*," "*Golden-armed*," "*Golden-fingered*," and other such names. She was even deemed by her worshippers to merit a golden statue. Among the temples named after Anahit, the one located in the town of Yeriza was renowned in Greater Armenia. There were also temples consecrated to her in Armavir, Artashat, Ashtishat, and Bagaran. Anahit's fecundity was celebrated

with heathen fervor and great pageantry on August 15. After the conversion of Armenia to Christianity, Anahit's holy day was transformed into the Feast of Virgin Mary.

According to Manuk Abeghian, at one time the worship of Anahit and Astghik were undifferentiated. Later on, however, the two goddesses assumed distinctive qualities: "Anahit became a chaste deity while Astghik remained the goddess of love and sensuality."³³ In the Armenian pantheon Astghik represented love and beauty, much like the Greek Aphrodite. Armenians dedicated to her a special holy day, known as *Vardavar* and celebrated in the month of July. On that day, it was customary for people to sprinkle water upon one another and offer roses at temples dedicated to Astghik and to release captive doves.

Nane (Athena), whose worship was widespread throughout the Caucasus and among Eastern peoples in general, was the symbol of wisdom. The worship of fire was symbolized by the god Mihr, much like his Greek equivalent Hephaestus, the Roman Vulcan, Hindu Agni, and Iranian Mithra. Tir was patron of the arts and writing, corresponding to the Greek Hermes and Apollo.³⁴ The notions of fertility and harvest were expressed by the names *Amenabegh* (All-fertile), *Amanor* (New year), and *Vanatur* (Shelter-giving).

Apart from anthropomorphic divinities, good and evil spirits also left an impression upon the imagination of early Armenians. Various animals and fantastic creatures (monsters, dragons, fairies, chimeras, vampires) were part of their mythological world. The belief in spirits that control nature was expressed by early Armenians in various ways—nature worship (tempest, storm, lightning, the sun, moon, stars and totems) by sacrifice and offerings; the worship of spirit by special rites; and by divinatory prayers against the evil forces of nature.

The pagan Armenians built temples and set up statues for their gods; they offered sacrifices of white livestock and heifers and dedicated special festivals to them. In the pre-Christian Armenian calendar, certain days and months were named after the pagan gods known to us from earlier written texts. Except for a necklace and the head of Anahit from a bronze statue, almost no physical remains pertaining to the Armenian pantheon have survived. The newly established Christian religion was ruthless toward the pagan culture of Armenia. Thus, only vestiges of pre-Christian Armenian culture have reached us.

The origins of Armenian polytheism have been extensively studied by scholars. Some of these, such as Manuk Abeghian, Grigor Ghapantsian, Heinrich Gelzer, Schtacelberg, and Friedrich Windischmann, view the Armenian pagan gods as alien borrowings, mainly from neighboring Iran; other scholars, such as Mkrtich Emin, Nikoghayos Adonts, and Kamilla Trever, insist upon the native character of the Armenian pantheon. If some borrowed elements are indeed discernible among Armenian mythological deities, it is also evident that the Armenian pantheon was an original and authentically nativistic and national creation to meet the spiritual needs of pre-Christian Armenia, whose glories appear to have been destroyed by the excessive zeal of the emerging Christian faith.

2. Armenian Folk Literature

Armenian literature, in the true sense of the term, actually began in the fifth century of the Christian era, when the Armenian alphabet was invented. But there is no doubt that oral literature, both in its prose and verse forms, existed well before invention of the alphabet. Had this literature been preserved, it would now constitute the first chapter of the history of Armenian literature. Unfortunately, after creation of the alphabet, Armenian scribes—with few exceptions—did not attempt to preserve the oral literature handed down from the distant past; they did not preserve the memories of ancient heroes, whose exploits might have become part and parcel of a literary legacy. Nevertheless, traces of those early centuries in the form of cuneiform and Aramaic inscriptions can be found on rocks, walls, and gold and silver objects. These inscriptions reveal the exploits and conquests of the great figures of ancient times. Little could the authors have known that those inscriptions would come to be regarded as the first examples of literature. In any case, traditional stories about gods and mankind were recounted orally, because people wished to hear tales about heroic deeds which they themselves might even be able to perform, if only they had the capacity and strength. Even though those accounts might be exaggerated and embellished, they conceal within themselves elements of genuine history and beliefs. Myths, especially about the gods, thus took shape, often having origins in religious rituals. Such myths would gradually lose their initial meaning, taking on new significance and becoming transformed into stories in their own right. Legends were usually derived from history.

Armenians acquired their conceptions about the gods, mankind, and nature from neighboring peoples. They learned to compose prayers and hymns; they dedicated songs of praise to the gods; they created lamentations and dirges for the dead. Armenians mastered the art of composition in the early pagan period and created their own oral musical tradition. Through their political and commercial contacts with

neighboring and Mediterranean peoples, they acquired concepts, the performance of which they adapted to their own ends and tastes.

The art of poetry dominated in the earliest Armenian periods. This is, of course, a natural phenomenon. Other peoples of the ancient world—the Hittites, Semites, Greeks, and Egyptians—also went through a similar process. Oral fragments which have reached us in their written forms in the works of certain Armenian historians demonstrate a rather refined and high level of artistry. That legacy of Armenian thought and taste, which was not preserved in its entirety because it was not written down, represents the first phase in the development of Armenian literature upon which later writer-historians of the fifth century were to expand.

Early Armenian literary traditions hearkened back to historical events which had taken place in the distant past. Much of this took the form of myths and epic tales, expressing the long process of unification and concentration of the tribes living on the Armenian Plateau. Traditions which took shape during those obscure times became the basis for the oral literature of Armenians. No doubt the fables, tales, legends, ballads, and epics which constitute that literary legacy changed immensely as they were passed down in one way or another to modern times. They were the product of national imagination created by Armenians during the pagan period and represented aesthetic generalizations of certain traits and aspects of ancient times. In order to appreciate the true Armenian spirit and understand the world view of Armenians, it is necessary to acquaint oneself with these ancient treasures of oral literature, as they were the first sparks of Armenian aesthetic consciousness.¹

Apart from certain samples preserved by early writers, no complete original texts of Armenian folk literature have come down to us. And, the fact that anything at all of this legacy from ancient times has survived may be attributed to historians of the fifth century, who in their works recorded for the first time certain epic episodes which had until then been recounted orally. The tales and legends recorded by Movses Khorenatsi, Pavstos Buzand, Agatangeghos, Sebeos, and Hovhan Mamikonian allow us to make inferences about the originals even if they are themselves many generations removed from those originals. Khorenatsi and the others probably effected changes as they subjected the stories to their own critical judgments. A significant

number of these traditional stories have unfortunately been lost; among those which have been preserved, there is a stronger folk spirit and Armenian essence in those transcribed by Pavstos Buzand than in those recorded by Movses Khorenatsi, whose legends read more like refined literature than folk narratives.²

This legacy of oral literature comprised two genres: poetry and narrative. The poetry included minstrel songs, dance chants, epithalamia, and dirges. The narratives included tales, legends, animal fables, epics, and ballads. The first composers of ancient pagan Armenian poetry were minstrels (*gusans*), among whom bards of the province of Goghtn were particularly famous for their artistry and were remembered through the centuries. Although what we have from them is no more than a few bits and pieces of poetry, these bits and pieces are nevertheless enough to give us an idea about the contents, language, and style of those earliest Armenian songs. In order to bring a song to life, the minstrel would call upon all the resources of his intellect and his body as well as his imagination; he would at times sing, occasionally declaim, play music, and sometimes even dance. This was an art which often approached theatrical performance and demanded great creative ability.

The poetic performing skills of the minstrels were passed down from generation to generation resulting, through long experience, in a high level of mastery in oral composition and recitation. This was a time when poetry was recited and not written down. These minstrel songs were not written down in the early Christian period either, since they were considered to be vulgar and frivolous. Nevertheless, being voices of happiness throughout the centuries, minstrels had their artistic and thematic influence, albeit indirectly, upon Armenian poetry.

Minstrels were often treated as hireling singers who composed songs about historical personages and eulogized their heroic deeds. They also performed lyric songs at weddings and feasts, praising Armenian princes and kings during the wassails which took place in their palaces. Armenian historians frequently mention the existence of minstrel songs in their works, but they almost never offer samples of them.

Dance songs (*yergs paruts*) were lyrical in nature, primarily performed by hired female singers during celebrations, weddings, and feasts. Epithalamia, which were more popular in tone, were linked to the wedding ritual itself. In Armenia, during the pagan period and even

after, traditional nuptial festivities lasted seven days and seven nights. The founding of a new hearth and a new union was celebrated with great enthusiasm among the common people and was accompanied by various songs and dances in conjunction with music.³ Khorenatsi presents the nuptial song of Satenik and Artashes as an example of a song connected with the ritual of marriage.

Dirges were songs performed during funeral processions by special singers who were known as "mourning maidens" (*gusank dzainarkuk*) or "wailing women" (*lalkan kanaik*). Proceeding before the funeral cortege would be a group of women dressed in black, the leader of which was called "mother of lamentations" (*mair voghbots*). She would cry out songs or prose poems and mourning maidens and wailing women would repeat them. The subject matter of such dirges consisted of praise of the virtues of the deceased, memories of him, and sorrowful events of his death. An example of this can be found in the work of Pavstos Buzand, where a funeral lament for Gnel is performed by his wife Parandzem.

Apart from dance, wedding, funeral, and minstrel songs, there is also mention by historians of ballads, lays, and complaints (*nvag, geghunk, mrmunjik*), which are presumed to have been songs of love and sorrow, even though not a single sample has reached us.

Among narrative prose genres in Armenian oral literature, the tale (*zruits*) was quite common. Movses Khorenatsi makes frequent allusions to such stories, utilizing different expressions to describe them: "unwritten old tales"; "unwritten tales support what I have said"; "by means of tales from ancient times." These unwritten tales provided Khorenatsi with the epic *Haik and Bel*. In his history, Khorenatsi gives prose citations from them on the basis of which it is assumed that these were fabular compositions with a basis in fact passed on by word of mouth.⁴

The legend (*araspel*) represents a more inventive and imaginative genre than the tale. Khorenatsi did not consider the stories *Haik and Bel*, *Aram of Haik*, *Artashes and Artavazd*, and *Tigran and Azhdahak* to be legends, because he considered them to be directly linked to Armenian history.⁵ On the other hand, stories of the birth of Vahagn, *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram*, *Tork the Ugly*, the chaining of Artavazd, and the mother of mongrels Yervand and Yervaz he labeled as legends because he considered them to be fictitious, where reality is

reflected only indirectly. The meaning of a legend, according to Khorenatsi, is allegorical. It is a way of expressing reality through the imagination of the people, a means of presenting truth through allusion.

Abeghian calls these legends or legendary tales with an ethno-historical basis, since the heroes of these ancient legends—Haik, Aram, Tigran, Artashes, and Artavazd—were great figures in Armenian history, kings and demigods (indeed, even gods) who had their equivalents in Greek mythology: Haik-Orion, Aramazd-Zeus, Vahagn-Heracles.⁶

Animal stories were also often called fables. In such tales, animals were heroes that interacted with people; and, sometimes people took on aspects of beasts, birds, and other creatures. This is a characteristic feature of early animal fables in animistic and totemic periods, when people believed in disembodied spirits which allegedly could influence people and animals as well as objects and events. Animals were endowed with human attributes and sentiments and had a mythological character. Later, the magical significance of these characters became attenuated, and they were transformed into simple allegorical tales in which the main protagonists became the wolf, fox, donkey, bear, and humans who interacted with them. The protective eagle in the story of the child of the Artzrunis, the dogs gnawing at Artavazd's chains, the birth of Yervand and Yervaz—all bear traces of animal fables and attest to the existence of such tales in the pagan period and thereafter.⁷

Various opinions have been expressed about ballads (*tveliats yerger*). One of these is that such ballads are the same as narrative songs in which the deeds of Armenian kings and princes are recounted.⁸ Another opinion is that they are "songs belonging to the narrative genre" which were performed at places of pilgrimage and in the presence of the sick.⁹

Among minor genres of folk literature in ancient Armenia were the parable, the proverb, the riddle, the anathema, the blessing, and the oath (*arak*, *aratz*, *haneluk*, *anetzk*, *orhnank*, *yerdum*). These "had great significance in legendary times and comprised the essential elements in narrative poetry."¹⁰ Khorenatsi makes no mention of this legacy.

During the time of Khorenatsi, no distinction was made between types in the narrative genre of Armenian pagan literature. And, for this reason narratives are sometimes called legends, sometimes tales, and

sometimes epic songs. Movses Khorenatsi referred to these as "songs of bards" (*yergk vipasanats*) or "ballads" (*tveliats yergk*).¹¹ They were pagan in character and were not especially appreciated by early Armenian historians. Many scholars have considered these to be long poems which were connected with one another, much like the Persian *Shahnamah*.¹²

The fragments of folkloric literature preserved by Movses Khorenatsi may be divided into two groups. In the *first series of Armenian epic narrative* are the most ancient legends or tales *Haik and Bel*, *Aram of Haik*, *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram*, *Tork the Ugly*, and the stories about Vahagn. The second series includes stories about Vardges, Tigran, Yervand, Artashes, Satenik, Artavazd and *Vishapazun* (dragon-born) Artavan.

Narrative episodes concerning the origin, development, and survival of the Armenian people are reflected in the legends *Haik and Bel* and *Aram of Haik*.

The "strong-armed" archer Haik, after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, did not wish to be subject to Bel, tyrant of Babylon, so he moved with his clan and settled in the land of Ararat. Khorenatsi describes this as follows:

The first gods were fearsome and glorious, and they were the cause of great bounty in the world, the origin of man in the world, and his proliferation. Before man there was the race of giants, huge, enormous, powerful beings, who arrogantly conceived the impious idea of building a tower, and then set about to accomplish it. From the wrath of the gods arose a kind of dreadful, divine wind, which blew down the tower and destroyed it, creating languages which were mutually incomprehensible, thus throwing men into clamor and confusion. And one of these was Haik, the son of Japheth, a renowned and brave leader, a powerful archer with a great bow.

Haik was handsome, broad shouldered, with very curly hair, flaming eyes, and brawny arms. He stood out as a brave and prominent figure among the giants, resisting all those who rose up trying to gain ascendancy over all the giants and demigods. He audaciously confronted the tyranny of Bel just at that time when the human race was dispersing and spreading

throughout the earth, among the hordes of giants, the unbridled barbarians and titans. Because in those days every man was in a frenzy, plunging his sword into the sides of his fellow man, striving to gain control over others, it came about that Bel succeeded in overcoming and occupying all of the land. But Haik did not wish to be subject to Bel, so after the birth of his son Aramaniak in Babylon, he got up and went to the land of Airarat, which is situated in the north, with all of his sons, his daughters, and his grandchildren, who were powerful men, altogether about three hundred persons, along with other bondmen, vassals, and his entire household.¹³

After consolidating his rule, Bel attempts to make Haik subject to him; but being rebuffed, he gathers a huge army and marches toward Haik's country to wage war against him.

When the two giants met one another, a dreadful tumult arose in the land as a consequence of their assaults upon each other, and fear and terror fell on both sides from their mutual attacks. Strong men in each camp were slain by the sword and tumbled in heaps upon the field of battle, but the outcome of the struggle remained uncertain as neither side would accept defeat. Seeing this unexpected and dubious turn of events, the Titan king became frightened, and, retreating, began to go back up the hill whence he had come down because he thought he could strengthen his position while the rest of his army regrouped, so that he might initiate a second battle. Comprehending Bel's intent, Haik the Archer rushed forward toward the king, firmly drawing his broad bow and letting fly a tri-fledged arrow which pierced his breastplate and went straight through his back, sticking with its tip into the earth. Thus, the arrogant Titan was vanquished, falling to the ground and gasping his final breath. And when the multitude saw this wondrously heroic deed, they all fled, in the directions they had turned.¹⁴

With his small group of men, the courageous Haik defeated the titan Bel, routing his troops, and he named his liberated country *Haik* (or *Hayastan*) after himself.

Generally speaking, in Armenian oral literature, the dominant political figure is the king of Armenians or a renowned prince who wields great power as the man who guides the state and protects his people. This individual, apart from human concerns and deeds, struggles for the benefit of his country and his people, and sometimes he even sacrifices himself in battle. Legends created in the Near East about monarchs possessing superhuman powers were prevalent in numerous literary forms and usually had a eulogistic or narrative character.

The traditional epic tale *Haik and Bel* has been recorded in slightly different versions by Khorenatsi and Sebeos. These differences have occasioned controversy among scholars. Mkrtich Emin in his two studies, *Epics of Ancient Armenia* (1850) and *Movses Khorenatsi and Ancient Armenian Epics* (1886), states that *Haik and Bel* is a folk legend and that Khorenatsi recorded it from oral sources, "changing its metrical form into a prosaic style."¹⁵ Grigor Khalatians refutes this and posits that *Haik and Bel* was derived from foreign and Armenian written sources and has no basis in reality.¹⁶ Abeghian and later scholars have demonstrated conclusively that the traditional epic tale *Haik and Bel* existed in the Armenian pagan period, independently of Khorenatsi's writings. Armenian place names (*Haikashen*, *Hayots Dzor*, *Haikavank*, *Haika Berdn*), the mention of the constellation of Haik in the Armenian version of the Bible, the reference by Agatangeghos to Haik as the forefather of Armenians, the folk tales about "Haik the king" and "Haik the god," and other facts confirm the existence of such a story before the time of Khorenatsi. Drawing upon both folk and other sources, Khorenatsi presented Haik as a powerful archer—handsome and broad-shouldered—who was linked with the building of the Tower of Babel as a kind of Promethean figure, a rebellious and god-defying titan.

Studies reveal that this legend preserves traces of the distant past, going back to early tribal society.¹⁷ The general conclusion is that the military confrontation between Haik and Bel refers to Urartu-Araratian and Assyro-Babylonian events (ninth-seventh centuries B.C.).

Some scholars believe that the worship of Haik extended from the regions around Lake Van to the Urartu-Araratian kingdom (ninth century B.C.), the tradition of the "strong armed and big bowed" hunter Haik being viewed as related to the time of the building of the Tower of Babel, which has been placed in the second half of the third millennium B.C.¹⁸ It is further assumed that after the war between Haik and Bel,

Haik was deified and became a popular god among Armenians. Not only did the people name many places after Haik, but even a constellation was named after him. The same constellation was called Orion by the Greeks.¹⁹ The traditional tale, which antedates Khorenatsi by thousands of years, preserves fragments of the past through its oral recollection of incidents connected with Assyrian power and domination. These were embroidered over the centuries and eventually written down by Khorenatsi, who bequeathed them to succeeding generations. The establishment of Haik and his clan reflects the origin of the Armenian people, with the mythical hero Haik viewed as the forefather of an entire nation.²⁰

The narrative of the exploits in *Aram of Haik* is also constructed upon a historical and legendary foundation which reflects the historical relationships of Armenians with Media and Cappadocia. According to tradition, Aram was considered to have been a scion five generations removed from Haik son of Japheth and the father of Ara the Handsome. He valiantly defended Armenia against Media, Assyria, and Cappadocia. Occupying a part of Assyria, he installed Cadmus as ruler of Cappadocia, overthrew the tyranny of Payapis Kaaghia the Titan, and appointed Mshak as governor. The latter founded the city of Mazhak (Caesarea, presently called Kayseri), naming it after himself. Describing events without dwelling upon details, Khorenatsi focuses upon the brave exploits of Aram. He links the establishment of the three Haiks (three Armenias) with the name of Aram, and considers him to be a hero equal to Haik. The main driving force in the events of this epic tale is Aram's patriotism. Aram struggles to protect his people against surrounding Semitic and Iranian tribes. While in the legend *Haik and Bel* only Bel appears as the enemy of Armenia, in this tale there are several enemies: Ninos and Barsham of Assyria, Niukar Mades of Media, and the tyrant titan Payapis Kaaghia of Cappadocia. These are cruel and cunning characters with whom Aram enters into conflict. Stories woven around his name came down to Urartian times and became mingled with deeds attributed to King Arame of Urartu in his struggles with Assyria.

Research into mythological elements of the legends takes us far back into the prehistoric period. The Assyrian god Barsham and the Cappadocian titan Payapis Kaaghia took up arms against Aram. According to Markwart, these are the same titans, under the leadership of Typhon, whom Zeus battled and vanquished in Greek mythology.²¹

Typhon and his clan are symbols of volcanic fire and fumes, against whom Aram waged war when Armenians still lived in the region of Cappadocia. This web of myths and legends hints at historical events connected with the "second forefather" (after Haik) of Armenians, Arim-Aram. It is after him, according to Khorenatsi, that all the peoples of the world came to call Armenians by this name. These traditional delineations and characterizations from the distant past with the merger of the real and legendary, reveal the existence in that prehistoric period of two main ethnic groups that came to make up the Armenian people, the *Hayasas* and *Armens*, when these groups lived in different places and were distinct from one another.

The legend *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram* occupies a special place in Armenian folk literature. It is a story similar to that of Adonis and Aphrodite in Greek tradition and other like tales from ancient Eastern mythology (Ishtar and Thammuz, Ishtar and Izdubar), but with a particular Armenian stamp. Here we have the myth of death and resurrection of the young hero, who is the embodiment of the idea of rebirth as realized in the changing of the seasons from autumn and winter to spring.

According to Heinrich Gelzer, who attempts to demonstrate the influence of Assyrian, Iranian, and Greek mythology upon Armenian mythology, the worship of Astghik as goddess of love, fertility, and water was introduced into Armenia from Semitic sources and this found its expression in the tale of Shamiram.²² The latter is known in Assyrian mythology as Ishtar or Militia; in Phoenicia she went under the names of Ashtart and Derketoy; in Assyria she was Derketoy, Atargatis, or Astarte; in Greece, Aphrodite; and in Armenia, Astghik, who was also often identified with the goddess Anahit. Daughter of the goddess Derketoy or Militia was Shamiram, who possessed the same traits as her mother; and her worship was widespread in Armenia and Asia Minor.

Apart from its mythological dimensions, *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram* is also connected with actual events in Armenian history. Shamiram, who was queen of Assyria, hearing of Prince Ara's handsomeness, wished to capture him, hoping to marry him or at least make him do as she pleased. To this end, she sent envoys to Armenia with many gifts, promising power and bounty to Ara. Unable to bear Ara's refusal, the lustful queen went to war against him, and Ara was killed in battle. Shamiram ordered that Ara's corpse be placed in the

attic of her palace, where she attempted to bring him back to life by means of magic spells. But she did not succeed in this. Then she ordered his body to be taken and thrown into a deep pit. And when Armenians were preparing to avenge their prince in battle, Shamiram announced, "I have commanded my gods to lick his wounds and he will come back to life." (According to Khorenatsi, Ara did not come back to life; but according to tradition, he did.) Then, resorting to cunning, she dressed up one of her lovers to look like Ara, announcing everywhere that he was alive; and she performed many sacrifices on this occasion, thus quelling the wrath of Armenians. After touring Armenia, she came to like the climate and nature of the country and had a splendid palace built in the countryside as a summer resort; and, she spent the pleasant months of the year in Armenia. When a revolt broke out in Assyria against her, she fled to Armenia; and just as she was drinking water from Lake Van, her pursuers caught up with her, tearing off her magical talismans and throwing them into the lake, whereupon she turned to stone. The following tale has been preserved concerning her death:

They say the queen Shamiram, who was a great and powerful ruler, once when she was journeying about in the land of Vaspurakan, saw in a certain place a group of children who had picked up some beads from the ground and were enraptured by them. Approaching them she immediately understood the value of those beads, giving them a gift in exchange. With those beads Shamiram began to cast spells and enchantments; and on account of the perfidy in her heart, she caused all kinds of evils throughout the country. In order to satisfy her lusts, with the help of the beads, she easily could summon anyone she wished to do her will. And whomever she wanted to destroy, she easily could destroy. This reached such a state that everyone was terrified of her and no one dared protest. An old man who had access to her and served her as an advisor was fully aware of all of her deeds; and he pondered for a long time how he could save the land from her sway and from the power of her beads. One day when he was in the presence of the queen in the town of Artamed, choosing a suitable moment, he grabbed the beads and fled. Shamiram was enraged and in great wrath she chased after him. But because she was unable to catch up with him, on

account of her great ire, she took her hair, which was long and thick, and fashioned a sling from it; and placing a huge boulder in it, she hurled it after the old man. As a result of the enormous force, her hair was torn from her head and the stone rolled and fell into a ditch near Artamed, where up till now it may still be seen. And the old man fled toward the shore-side town of Datvan, where he cast the beads into the lake and thus saved the whole land from the evil spells of Shamiram. And it is from this that we have the expression, "Beads of Shamiram in the lake."²³

In the legend, Shamiram thoroughly embodies all the characteristics of a lewd and lustful tyrant; and, from this point of view it is not surprising that Dante in his *Divine Comedy* places Shamiram (Semiramis), along with Cleopatra, in hell. In contrast, the mythical character of Ara suggests mysteries of vernal rebirth, fecundity, and fidelity; and he came to be known as a god of war and patriotism.

The legend *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram* in Khorenatsi's version is certainly unique, with the human qualities of the heroes, psychological generalizations, and its artistic merit. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries this traditional material served as a basis for a number of Armenian literary and artistic creations (various theatrical interpretations of Ara the Handsome, Nayiri Zarian's epic poem *Ara Geghetsik* [Ara the Handsome], Vartkes Sureniants's painting *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram*).

The legend *Tork the Ugly* is about that mythic hero who emerged from Haik's tribe of titans. He was a man with a coarse exterior who had an ugly face. Tork was renowned for his great deeds, around which many folk songs were composed. With his tremendous strength he could cleave rocks and carve inscriptions upon them with his fingernails; he could hurl huge boulders after retreating ships, causing them to sink. This is reminiscent of a similar act by the cyclops Polyphemus in Homer's *Odyssey*.

In literary scholarship first traces of the origins of Tork or Turk have been sought in the Hittite god of vegetation and fertility, Tarku or Turgu (Grigor Ghapantsian and Nikoghayos Adonts), a name which in folk etymology came to be associated with the Armenian word *turk* (dues or tribute, derived from the verb "to give"). Turk's name was well-known in the province of Angegh, which was situated in southern

Armenia, where worship of the god Angegh prevailed; and for this reason he was known as Tork Angeghia, or Tork of Angegh.²⁴ Later, the name was interpreted as meaning ugly (from *an* [without] and *gegh* [beauty]).

The Armenian legend *Vahagn the Dragonslayer* was the most loved and widespread of such works among Armenians. In literary scholarship different opinions have been expressed concerning the divine origin of Vahagn. Some scholars (Alishan and Emin) have connected him with sun worship; others have viewed him as god of the hunt and of victory (Gelzer). Abeghian considered Vahagn to be a god of thunder, a young male with a beard of fire and sun-like eyes, paragon of valor and courage. He was equivalent to the Greek Hercules, the German god of thunder Thor, and the Indian Indra and Agni.

Vahagn is the son of the earth and the sky, the child of reeds and the purple sea. He does battle against the evil embodiment of thunder in the form of the dragon, the beast that blocks out the light of the sun and cuts off the flow of the earth's rivers; and he is thus known as *Vishapakagh* (dragonslayer). It is also known (through Anania Shirakatsi's *Cosmogony*) that he rose up and waged war in the heavens against the Assyrian god Barsham; and, one cold winter's day he stole Barsham's straw, from the scattering of which was created the expanse of constellations known as *Hardagoghi chanaparh* (literally, "path of the straw thief," Armenian name for the Milky Way).

Khorenatsi sought the historical bases of Vahagn's divinity in the heroic battles of the eponymous Vahagn, Yervanduni dynasty founder Tigran I's son (sixth century B.C.), against the Medes, rendering him Vahagn the Dragonslayer. Furthermore, Khorenatsi also preserved for us that song about Vahagn which, according to his own testimony, used to be sung to the accompaniment of the pandore. In this work the terrible travail of nature, the flaming firmament, which gives birth to Vahagn, god of lightning and the sun is depicted. This is the only song dedicated to Armenian pagan gods that has come down to us. God and nature coalesce here. Vahagn is the son of personified nature; he is born of the travail of earth and sky, out of a purple sea, from a flaming red reed, bursting forth with his "fiery hair" and "eyes like suns."

Altogether only a few lines, yet here, in vivid colors and in stunning imagery which hearkens back to the earliest times, is depicted

the portrait of the most ancient of Armenian gods, Vahagn, which in its description of pagan creation is unique and divine:

The heavens were in travail, the earth was in travail,
The purple sea was in travail;
The red reed in the sea was also in travail;
Smoke gushed out of the tube of the reed,
Flames burst out of the tube of the reed;
And from the flames dashed forth a fair youth;
His hair was fire,
His beard flames,
And his eyes were suns.²⁵

This is considered to be the oldest surviving piece of Armenian poetry,²⁶ probably antedating any of the other pagan songs which have reached us from the Hellenistic period. References to the divinity of Vahagn have even been found in inscriptions on stone which date back to 2000-1500 B.C., where we find images (sky, sea, water, dragon) similar to those in the few lines of the poem above.²⁷ It has been noted in Armenian studies that young Vahagn, with his sun-like eyes and his birth from sky and sea, is more mythical than Haik, the forefather of Armenians, who resembles rather a real, historic hero. It is noteworthy, however, that both Khorenatsi and Shirakatsi considered Vahagn to be an ancestor of the Armenians.²⁸

By means of comparative mythology it becomes clear that Vahagn has almost the same character as that of thunder gods of a number of other Indo-European peoples. The similarities between Vahagn and Indra, god of thunder and war of the Hindus, are particularly striking. The travail of earth and sky which gave birth to Vahagn was also characteristic of Indra, who was water-born, similar to the celestial "purple sea" in the myth of Vahagn. The red reed in the sea, from which smoke and flames emerged, and from which Vahagn, with his "fiery hair" and "flaming beard," was born also resembles the birth of Agni, the Hindu god of lightning and the sun, who was born of water and plants and had a fiery appearance like Vahagn. Regardless of the fact that Vahagn was worshipped under different names by almost all peoples of the Orient, Abeghian considers that worship to have been a

borrowing from Iranian mythology, the Armenian variant of Veretragna.²⁹

While Alishan linked the myth to the Hindu worship of the sun, he did not consider it to be a borrowing, because Vahagn was very beloved and widely worshipped in Armenia, a fact that is not characteristic of alien gods.³⁰ Other scholarly studies, however, confirm that sources of this myth stretch back to the very distant pasts of the peoples of the Orient, with each people giving it a unique interpretation. Vahagn's divine attributes are viewed by most scholars as resembling those of the Hindu god of light and the sun, Agni (second millennium B.C.), and the god of war, Indra. Etymological roots of the name *Vahagn* have even been linked with the nouns *-agni* and *wah*, where *wah* signifies "bringer" and *agni* "fire."³¹

Thus, we can consider *Haik and Bel*, *Aram of Haik*, *Ara the Handsome* and *Shamiram*, *Tork the Ugly*, and *Vahagn the Dragonslayer* to be the earliest epic creations of Armenian artistic thought and taste. They came down to us from prehistoric times, all the way to the middle of the sixth century B.C., where they reflect events of the Urartian period. These fables and tales comprise the first series of Armenian epic poetry.

The *second series of Armenian epic narrative* was produced during the time of the Yervanduni dynasty (from the first half of the sixth century until the third century B.C.). From this period the tales relating to Vardges Manuk and Tigran I (Yervandian) are well known.

The epic of *Vardges Manuk*, which is also one of the names mentioned by Khorenatsi, had been linked until recently with Tigran the Great (first century B.C.), in accordance with Abeghian's opinion on the subject. But more recent research dates the epic of *Vardges Manuk* to the time of the Yervanduni dynasty and specifically to the reign of Yervand Sakavakiats (Yervand the Short-lived) in 570-560 B.C.

Khorenatsi himself mentions that Vardges took the sister of Yervand Sakavakiats as his wife.³² As to who Vardges Manuk was, we have no information at all. Whether he is part of the epic cycle or was sung separately is difficult to determine.

Vardges Manuk rose up and left the province of Tuhk,
Which is along the Kasagh River,
And he came and settled upon the hill of Shresh,

In the town of Artemid, along the Kasagh River,
In order to knock upon the door of Yervand the king.

Interpretation of this poetic excerpt reveals that Vardges Manuk (in ancient times the word *manuk* meant miracle-worker) had journeyed from the province of Tuhk to the town of Artemid to arrange a betrothal.³³

The legend about Tigran I, known as *Tigran and Azhdahak*, was transcribed twice in the fifth century of the Christian era—the first time in the book *Hiusumn pitoyits* and the second by Khorenatsi, who drew upon the former version. Apart from Khorenatsi's recension, we can find in the works of the Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon two other accounts which appear to be conflated stories about Tigran I that are basically similar to Khorenatsi's telling of the story.³⁴

The tale of *Tigran and Azhdahak* is grounded in the conflict and struggle between Tigran I and the king of the Medes, Azhdahak (Astiages), which has a historical basis. Tigran I (560-535 B.C.), whom Khorenatsi calls Yervandian, was son of the founder of the oldest Armenian dynasty, Yervand Sakavakiats. In order to break free from the rule of Media, Tigran I became an ally in the middle of the sixth century B.C. with the Achaemenid commander Cyrus. This alliance frightened the king of the Medes. Azhdahak resorted to cunning and attempted to break this alliance. According to tradition, he married Tigran's sister, and then tried, under the guise of friendship, to plot secretly against Armenia. But Tigran's prudent sister, Tigranuhi, alerted her brother about this, and Tigran battled Azhdahak. The king of the Medes was killed, and Tigran brought his family and a great number of prisoners and made them settle in Armenia. Khorenatsi relates the following regarding this:

After completing this task, Tigran sent his sister Tigranuhi along with a great multitude of people to the royal city of Tigranakert, which Tigran had built in his own name, and he ordered that those provinces be placed under her control. And it is said, that the Vostan-called aristocratic class of the areas around that city are descendants, royal scions, from that time.³⁵

It is noteworthy that Tigranuhi is the first Armenian woman to appear as a character in ancient Armenian epic poetry. She is an intelligent and circumspect woman who has no fear of Azhdahak's threats and warns Tigran of impending danger, thus saving her brother and her country. Khorenatsi also mentions Tigran's wife, Zaruhi, but tells us nothing about her.³⁶ The presence of such historical facts in the tale does not, however, negate the existence of mythological elements in it. It has been noted that in oral literature Tigran's adversary Azhdahak is the same as the hero of the thunder tales of the ancient Hindus and Persians, Azhi Dahakan, against whom, according to Armenian mythology, Vahagn the Dragonslayer, who later was considered as Tigran's son, did battle. This traditional subject, spiced with mythical elements, is endowed with epic qualities. There are numerous incidents of secondary importance which round out the contents of the whole; but, these incidents are linked to the main story line and complement it, giving it variety and great vitality. The heroes of the tale are endowed with individual qualities, making them real, lifelike characters with their strong and weak traits. Tigran was a brave and handsome hero like Haik, of whom Khorenatsi expressed his admiration:

Because he was the most powerful and the most prudent, as well as the most brave of all our kings, he aided Cyrus in overthrowing the rule of the Medes; and he conquered the Greeks, making them his subjects for no short time; and he expanded our country's territories to the farthest reaches of earlier times. He was envied by all of his contemporaries.

And what true man, who has respect for bravery and fortitude, does not rejoice in his memory and does not strive to be a man like him? He stood at the head of menfolk and showed his courage; he exalted our people, and we, who were under foreign yoke, came to place yokes upon others and demand tribute. He increased the stores of silver, gold, and precious gems. Also [he made accessible] men's and women's clothes of various colors and embroidered decoration, in which the plain looked as wonderful as the beautiful, and the beautiful looked like the heroes of the time. Foot-soldiers became horsemen, and those who used to fight with slingshots became archers; those who were armed with clubs now used swords and spears; and

the naked were protected by shields and armor. And when they gathered in one place, their external appearance and the shimmering of their armor and weapons alone sufficed to vanquish and drive away the enemy. He brought peace and prosperity.

This and many other such things did he bring to our land, the blond and curly-haired Yervandian, Tigran, with his ruddy face, pleasant look, strong legs, beautiful feet, attractive build, broad shoulders, temperance in eating and drinking, and moderation in celebration. Our ancients, who used to sing about him to the accompaniment of a pandore, said that he was moderate in his indulgence in the pleasures of the flesh and wise and eloquent and full of those qualities useful to a man.³⁷

The deeds of Tigran I, Azhdahak's dream and his marriage to Tigranuhi, depiction of the war between the two kings, and description of the final victory, as well as the contrast between Tigran's and Azhdahak's personalities and qualities—good vs. evil, courage vs. cowardice, boldness vs. connivance—make this legend in every respect an artistic creation. The economic and political consolidation of the Artashesian dynasty, the campaigns and victorious battles of Armenian kings, and generally, great historic events from the second century B.C. to the first century of the Christian era had a significant effect on contemporary Armenian life and became an endless source of songs, ballads, tales, and traditions.

These popular, historical, and traditional songs and ballads constitute a coherent whole which belongs to the second series of Armenian epic narratives and is less legendary in character. It is national in character, unique, and completely based upon legendary renderings of historical events. Fact and fiction merge to form hyperbole about events and exploits of important figures. The names of heroes serve to remind listeners of traditional stories and tales as well as heroic deeds of the past, so that new tales could be built upon them. Thus, numerous non-historical events have been circulated, frequently obscuring history. In this sense, for minstrels who sang and spread these stories, the construction of heroic and human character was more important than accurate depiction of historical events. The gallery of great Armenian royal figures included Artashes I, Tigran II, Artavazd, Artashes II, and

others. Numerous songs and traditions reflecting the memory and mood of the period were composed about each of them. And, since the names of kings, the deeds they performed, and sometimes even the similarity of their fate was repeated, in time, real events concerning different individuals were combined and embodied in one figure. It is supposed that the aforementioned songs and traditions were once sung or recited; but they were not tied together. It was only later that they were interwoven. Eventually they came to form a narrative whole with various cycles. These songs and traditions, however, lack general internal artistic coherence.³⁸

The second series of old Armenian folklore, as opposed to the first which originated primarily in the Van region, is related to the Vaspurakan area, since paganism survived for a longer period there. Therefore, ancient Armenian legends and ballads were preserved here, spread by Goghtan bards.

Troubadours or minstrels recited and at times sang various fragments of legends (the founding of Artashat, the wedding of Artashes, the battle of the dragons, the death of Artashes). They sang and accompanied themselves on a special three-stringed instrument called a pandore. This means of embellishing the singing of the story is common to other peoples as well. These traditional stories, whose heroes are Artashes I, Artavazd, Yervand, and others support each other through internal links and complement the stories of Haik, Ara, Aram, Tork Angegh, and other legendary heroes of Armenian mythology. The tale of Artashes, which in turn is composed of the tale of *Sanatruk and Yervand* and the tale of *Artashes and Artavazd*, occupies an important place in the second tier of epic. The tale of Artashes is rich in exploits and narrative detail and embraces a multifaceted historical period and the Armenian way of life and customs.

Fusing factual and fictional events, the legendary tale of *Sanatruk and Yervand* relates how Sanatruk's mother, Avde, is caught in a storm during a winter's journey through Armenia. The travelers lose each other. The nurse Sanot, keeping the child at her breast for three days, saves him, and therefore the child is named Sanatruk, that is, the "Gift of Sanot."

Sanatruk later becomes king of Armenia. He has a prince in his service by the name of Yervand who, born of "an abnormal relation," was the child of an ugly and wanton woman, like Minotaur born of

Pasiphae in the Greek myth. Sanatruk is killed accidentally while hunting, and the crown is illegitimately seized by Yervand who, in an attempt to consolidate his power, kills Sanatruk's sons. Only little Artashes survives, and his tutor, Smbat Bagratuni, takes him to Persia. In order to firmly secure the kingship, Yervand undertakes great works, founds cities, gives generous gifts to the *nakharars* (princes), signs treaties with the Romans and Georgians, and so on. Khorenatsi writes of this:

It is pleasant for me to speak also about the beautiful town of Yervandakert, which the same Yervand embellished with beautiful and charming constructions. He filled the center of the great valley with inhabitants and splendid buildings, shining like the pupil of an eye. Around the inhabited area gardens of sweet-smelling flowers were arranged, as the iris of the eye surrounds the pupil. A multitude of vineyards resembled the beautiful crescent of thick lashes; on the northern side its curved form truly imitated the arching brows of charming maidens. To the south the level plain [recalled] the beauty of smooth cheeks. The river with its high banks resembled a mouth with matching lips. Such was the beauty of the site that looked with unblinking eye, you might say, up to the heights of the royal residence, a truly fertile and majestic estate.

... But they say of Yervand that through magic he had the evil eye. So the royal servants who attended him at daybreak had the habit of placing hard stones opposite Yervand. And they say that these hard stones split from the malevolence of his glance. But this is either false and a fable or else he had some demonic power in himself so that he could harm those he wished in this fashion by the mere repute of his gaze.

When the young Artashes grew up, and after his tutor Smbat had shown many brave acts of valor, the Aryan princes, pleased with him, requested the king to give him as a gift whatever he might ask. The king agreed and said to the princes: "See what that brave man desires."

And they said: "Your immortal benevolence, Smbat desires nothing other than to establish your blood and kin,

Artashes son of Sanatruk, who has been banished from his own kingdom, on his own throne."

The king of kings agreed to this and gave to Smbat a part of the Assyrian army and the army of Atrpatakan so that they might take Artashes and set him on his father's throne.³⁹

Hearing what has happened, Yervand rushes to gather the *nakharars* and sally forth against the forces of Artashes and his guardian Smbat. Fierce battles take place, in which the majority of *nakharars* swing over to Artashes's side, and Yervand along with his whole army is destroyed. Artashes reestablishes his father's kingdom and builds the city of Artashat in his name. Of this Khorenatsi relates the following:

Artashes came to the place where the Arax and Metzamor join; pleased with the hill, he built there a city which he named Artashat after himself. The Arax provided him with pine wood, so it was built quickly and without labor. He erected in it a temple and transferred to it from Bagaran the statue of Artemis and all the ancestral idols. But the statue of Apollo he put up outside the city near the road. They brought from Yervand's capital the Jewish captives who had been transferred there from Armavir, and he settled them in Artashat. Similarly all the splendors of Yervand's capital that the latter had brought from Armavir, plus those that he had constructed there, [Artashes] transferred to Artashat. And he himself embellished the city even further as the royal capital.⁴⁰

The variety of episodes and lively depiction of events, the battle for the throne, Yervand's death, as well as various aspects of his character as an intelligent and constructive man, make this cycle of the epic a work of art in the fullest sense.

The tale *Artashes and Artavazd* recounts the marriage of Artashes I. While Artashes was occupied with the construction of Artashat, the Alans attacked Armenia. Artashes bravely waged war against them and took captive the heir to the enemies' throne. The Alans sued for peace, but Artashes refused. Then the captive's sister, the beautiful Satenik, came to the banks of the Kur river on the opposite

shore of which Artashes had struck camp, and standing upon a precipice she called forth to Artashes:

I say to you, valiant Artashes,
Who has conquered the brave nation of the Alans:
Come, listen to me, the beautiful-eyed daughter of the Alans,
And let the young man go.
For it is not customary that heroes, for vengeance,
Take the lives of the progeny of other heroes,
Or keep them in the rank of slaves,
And establish perpetual enmity
Between two brave nations.⁴¹

Hearing Satenik's wise and intelligent words and charmed by her beauty, Artashes thought about marrying her and sent emissaries to the Alans to reach an accord and to ask for her hand in marriage. Learning of Artashes's proposal, the king of the Alans responded:

And whence will the brave Artashes give
Thousands of thousands
And myriads of myriads
For the noble-born maiden of the Alans?⁴²

But the brave Artashes, on his black steed, forded the river and lassoed Satenik around her waist and brought her back to his camp.

Noble King Artashes mounted the beautiful black horse,
He took a strap of red leather with golden rings,
He crossed the river like a swift-winged eagle,
He threw the strap of red leather with golden rings
He cast it around the waist of the Alan maiden,
He hurt the tender maiden's waist.
And quickly brought her to his camp.⁴³

The wedding celebration followed:

Gold rain rained down
When Artashes became a groom.

Pearls rained down
When Satenik became a bride.⁴⁴

The happy course of the epic's events later changed, however. The wise Satenik, full of womanly dignity, soon after the wedding, harbored romantic feelings toward Argavan, which disrupted Artashes's married life and opened the door to strife in the family and at court. Artashes's son, Artavazd, whom Khorenatsi characterizes as "a brave man, self-satisfied and proud," hearing of the gossip about his mother and Argavan, turns his father Artashes against Argavan. The former takes away Argavan's right to a secondary throne and gives it to Artavazd. However, the enmity continues, and Artavazd in the end destroys Argavan and his clan, seizing his estate and principedom. The last scene in the legend of Artashes's life, which was saved thanks to Grigor Magistros (eleventh century), tells of the Armenian king's thoughts before death—the charm of times gone by, the love of peaceful life and nature, the longing for the morning of Navasard (the first of the pagan year), and the smoke of the hearth.⁴⁵

Who would give me the smoke of my chimney
And the morning of Navasard,
The running of the does and the trotting of the bucks?
We would blow trumpets and beat drums
As befits kings.⁴⁶

Artashes's death evoked great sorrow among the Armenians; his funeral became a universal day of mourning. This is how Khorenatsi describes it:

He became ill in Marand, in the town of Bakurakert. And he sent a certain Abegha, leader of the Abeghian clan, a clever, sycophantic, and hypocritical man, at his own request, to the region of Yekegh, to Yeriza, to the temple of Artemis, to seek from the idols healing and a long life for the king; Artashes died before he returned. And Ariston writes how many multitudes died at the death of Artashes: his beloved wives and concubines and faithful servants; and what a multifarious display they made in honor of the corpse—in a civilized fashion and not as

barbarians. The coffin he says was of gold; the bier and litter were of silk; the robes around the body were threaded with gold; the crown on his head and the arms set before him were of gold; around the bier were his sons and a host of his kinsmen, and beside them the military, the leaders and companies of the princely houses, the troops of soldiers, all armed as if to march out to war. In front they blew bronze trumpets, behind came mourning maidens dressed in black, and wailing women, and then followed the mass of the common people. Thus they accompanied him to burial. Around the tomb many died willingly, as we said above. This sovereign was so beloved to our country that he had reigned over for forty-one years.⁴⁷

After Artashes, his son Artavazd became king; his reign did not resemble that of his father in the slightest. He was a greedy tyrant, who banished his brothers from Airarat to the provinces of Aghiovit and Arberan. Shortly after coming to power, he went mad while hunting and fell into a deep pit. According to legend, Artavazd even envied the fame of his father who was so well loved that people would sacrifice themselves upon his grave. Upset, Artavazd would say:

When you went
You took all the land with you.
How shall I reign over these ruins?⁴⁸

Thereupon, Artashes cursed his son, saying:

If you go hunting
Up the Azat, toward Masis,
May the spirits seize you,
Take you up the Azat, toward Masis.
May you remain there,
And never see light.⁴⁹

As a fulfillment of Artashes's curse upon his son, the tale recounts that Artavazd remained locked up in a cave, bound in iron chains: "Two dogs continually gnaw at his chains, as he tries to escape and put an end to the world. According to tradition, the chains are

reinforced by the sound of blacksmiths striking their anvils. For this reason, to this day, many blacksmiths, in accordance to the legend, strike their anvil three or four times on Sunday, so that, as they say, Artavazd's chains will be strengthened."⁵⁰

At the end of the legend Khorenatsi writes that at Artavazd's birth, women of Azhdahak's clan cast a spell upon him, as a consequence of which he became demonic.

The dragons abducted the infant Artavazd
And put a demon in his place.

The image of Artavazd is given a different interpretation in Yeznik Koghbatsi's *Refutation of Sects*. In this work Artavazd is a good hero, and Armenia awaits his release so that he can completely renew the country. A similar view is also expressed by a modern scholar of Armenian folklore, Grigor Grigorian. The latter explains that Artavazd's protest against his father ("When you went you took all the land with you. How shall I reign over these ruins?") did not arise from vanity or an evil disposition. The numerous self-immolations which were performed on the occasion of Artashes's death were not merely suicides. Artavazd was, in fact, protesting the practice of slaying slaves upon their master's death. This phenomenon had assumed alarming dimensions in Artashes's time.

"As a mythological figure," writes Grigorian, "Artavazd is securely bound like Prometheus and other giants locked in the Caucasus, such as the grey-haired Kabardinian hero, the Georgian Amiran, the Abkhazian Amran, and Mher, driven by anger to end the evil world."⁵¹

In the second series of Armenian epic narratives, the *Tigran and Artashes* cycles, which are composed of various tales and have several variants, were created as early as the second century B.C.

They exhibit numerous facets of aesthetic taste and depict life in the initial period of Armenian literature. This legendary material was put together in various periods and was cultivated by different individuals. Epics are usually told objectively, as history long gone by, in the present tense and in the first person. The raconteur often considers it necessary to mention that he is not the author, although his attitude toward a given personage or event expressed not indifference but strong feelings. "And in this book," writes Khorenatsi about Tigran, "what is dearer to me

than prolonging the praise and stories about him? He was in all things judicious and evenhandedly weighed each person's life with the power of his intellect. He did not envy his betters, nor did he despise his lessers, but strove to spread the cloak of his care over everyone without discrimination."⁵²

This aspect of Tigran's character leaves a deep impression upon the reader, especially in dialogues and monologues. During dialogues his interlocutors are far away and send their messages by courier. An example of this was the dialogue between Haik and Bel, which is conducted via messengers. "You settled in the cold frost; however, warm and soften the icy frigidity of your proud personality and obey me and live peacefully and you may settle anywhere in my land you choose."⁵³ Azhdahak's dream is a good example of a monologue. The exchange of letters is also a common occurrence in Armenian epic narrative, which is characteristic also of Eastern epics such as Firdawsi's *Shahnamah*.

These stories-turned-legend also acquired allegorical and symbolic coloration, which was considered essential to narrative style at that time. Azhdahak's dream, the wrestling match between him and Tigran, the tales about Artavazd, the interrelations between dragons and people, the hyperbole, metaphors, similes, and epithets which form a part of this literary legacy express the modes and language of that period. The episodes from pagan life present rare images of ancient Armenian times (Satenik's marriage, Artashes's curse and funeral, the wedding of Azhdahak and Tigranuhi). And where there are details concerning the lives of the main figures (*Artashes and Artavazd*, *Tigran and Azhdahak*), the heroes of the tales are even more real and human than in the stories *Haik and Bel* or *Aram of Haik*, where it seems the main figures are not real people but rather fabulous gods descended from heaven. Especially noteworthy are the pure poetic texts included in the epic, the small fragments, thirteen in number, which date to Armenian prehistory and have survived as classical poetry. Notable among these are the hymn on Vahagn's birth; "I say to you, valiant Artashes"; "And whence will the brave Artashes give"; "Noble King Artashes mounted the beautiful black horse,"; "Gold rain rained down"; "Lady Satenik burned with love"; and, "When you went"; all but one of which, as the oldest samples of national epic poetry, are cited by Khorenatsi in his *History of the Armenians*. Grigor Magistros preserved "Who would give me the smoke of my chimney." These poetic fragments

exhibit unique style and language. Even in the distant past, creative bards had mastered the art of beautiful language and were familiar with allegory. They used adjectives, epithets, and unique noun combinations which not only gave their verses a unique content, but also an extraordinary glow: "gushed out of the reed," "the purple sea," "the red reed," "hair was fire," "beard [was] flames," "the strap of red leather with golden rings," "tender maiden," "the smoke of my chimney," and "the morning of Navasard."

The language, which is used in its natural form, is dense and unadorned; it, nevertheless, does not avoid repetition and is full of action, e.g., *The heavens were in travail*, *the earth was in travail*, or, *Smoke gushed out of the tube of the reed*, *Flames burst out of the tube of the reed*. Even with amazing simplicity, the verse is alive. It has its direct and conversational styles, which fill the poetry with emotion and save it from monotony.

I say to you, valiant Artashes,
Who has conquered the brave nation of the Alans:
Come, listen to me, the beautiful-eyed daughter of the Alans,
And let the young man go.

The language of Goghtan songs, which conveys classical ideas and lexicon, is evidence of the antiquity of *grabar* (Classical Armenian). The latter, with its nature and style, manifests itself as the product of popular psychology and thought. That poetic style, to which all these traits gave rise, has an unusual transparence and extraordinary charm. It is an aesthetic vision that has reached us from the distant past, yet it remains attractive even today in its luminous clarity and structure. The style, even though it is three thousand years old, leaves a deep impression and transports the reader through time and space. The imagination and language of those popular singers offered up with music, possess an amazing majesty and virtuosity. Especially, if we bear in mind, that pagan sounds and spirit gave wing to these words, often transforming them into ritual. If those songs were sung, then they had to be in verse, so that they would have musical harmony. In this sense, Goghtan songs are unique; and for this reason, they are considered to be outside the ordinary rules of versification.⁵⁴

These songs have different meters, whose unexpected changes infuse the songs with life and make them pleasant to the ear. This prosodic trait arises from the fact that Goghtan bards adjusted poetic meter to the melody. These songs had rhymes which were not essential to their formal coherence, since the meter of the accompanying music often filled this gap. Generally, they were in prose verse with meter and were characterized sometimes by the momentum specific to epic action and sometimes by lyricism, simplicity of language, and the consonance of epithets. It must be said that what fragments of factual and legendary tales we have today we owe to troubadours. Minstrels were responsible for the transformation of historical events into legend. They not only sang songs of love and joy but also transmitted orally the heroic deeds of illustrious Armenians, at times with exaggeration and flair, but always basing their creations on real people and events.

In the third to fifth centuries A.D., Armenian folklore produced one other surviving epic known as *The Persian War*. This work covers events of the period when Armenia was ruled by the Arshakunis, and Armenians were engaged in a long war against the Persians, stoutly defending their freedom. The lengthy struggle produced heroes and brave deeds which were recounted among the people orally and in poetry and were eventually written down in various forms by the Armenian historians Agatangeghos, Pavstos Buzand, Movses Khorenatsi, and Sebeos. Here there were no supernatural forces and gods like there were in former epics. The characters were historical and heroic individuals, subject to comparatively little legendary transformation. This link in the epic tradition is more realistic than the prior Armenian tale tradition which was fused with pagan mythological elements. In medieval epics, mythological conceptions have already given way to religious thinking. Thus, Christian miracles, angels, crosses, and churches become essential ingredients of the stories.

The cast of the epic includes a series of kings and Mamikonian commanders who took part in the war and were immortalized and glorified for their courageous exploits. This is the story of several generations, but the content of the struggle was nevertheless the same. The leading figures were Khosrov the Great, Trdat, Khosrov Kodak, Tiran, Arshak, Pap, Varazdat, and Arshak. The events of the long struggle between the Armenian king Khosrov the Great and Artashir, founder of the Persian Sassanid dynasty, are related in epic detail. These

are followed by the story of Khosrov's murder at the hand of the Parthian Anak, sent by Artashir, and the abduction of Khosrov's son, Trdat, to safety in Greece by Artavazd Mamikonian. The heroic deeds of Trdat, the story of his love for Hripsime, the tale of the marriage of Arshak and Parandzem, military exploits of Pap and Mushegh, their murder by traitors, and then Manuel's lineage—all left a deep impression upon reader or listener.

Each component of the epic is a separate tale which in its general content maintains chronological continuity. Internal links and causation are often absent. This is a literary phenomenon that characterizes ancient epics. The general theme is the battle between Persians and Armenians, the war which is waged in the name of defense of the homeland and becomes a central theme of the epic. Indeed, patriotism brings into sharper focus and sets into motion the heroes' behavior and deeds. The language is that of the people and the story is told by the vivid impression of eyewitnesses. Despised and sympathetic characters are distinguished by exaggerated traits or expressive epithets. The Persians—the epitome of enmity—are evil, deceitful, and treacherous. They murder Khosrov by trickery, blind Tiran, seize Arshak, dishonor the Armenian queen Parandzem, while the Armenian commander Mushegh is nobly returning the Persian king Shapuh's harem, captured during the war.

The epic does not appear in the works of Armenian historians as it originally existed, that is, in verse. Agatangeghos and Pavstos Buzand present it in prose, though it is not difficult to detect traces of the original poetic verse. Armenologist Manuk Abeghian, who exhaustively studied the development of various stages of Armenian folklore in his *Armenian Epical Folklore*, was the first to rearrange this legacy in verse. He reached the conclusion that the poetic meter in these popular tales was the same as that of the spiritual and ancient epic songs.⁵⁵

The next period of Armenian epic folklore is called *The War of Taron*. The historic events which are found in *The Persian War* were transmitted from age to age and subjected to new transformations in light of the events of the time. However, these historic occurrences lost their national character and gradually became localized around events in the provinces of Taron and Sasun. These two provinces were closely associated with the Mamikonian name (seventh to eighth centuries).

These relics of ancient Armenian folklore, which incorporate aesthetic concepts and tastes of the day, acquire great significance for the subsequent development of Armenian literature. This fund of popular lore contributed to and facilitated the emergence of the epic *David of Sasun*, with its nationalistic and humanistic ideas and bold artistic imagery. The latter work served as material for artistic inspiration, laying the foundation for the creation and development of numerous new folk tales.

3. Creation of the Armenian Alphabet: Mesrop Mashtots

From the first to fifth centuries of the Christian era, Armenia was ruled by the Arshakuni dynasty. During this reign, the rivalry between the Roman and Sassanid Persian Empires continued to grow. Armenia, located at the crossroads between these two warring empires, had considerable strategic importance, controlling routes leading to India and Persia to the east and with the Black Sea shores and Asia Minor countries to the west. It had to wage lengthy battles just to maintain its independence. To create a buffer zone against the religious might of Persia, the king of Armenia, Trdat III (287-330), adopted Christianity as the official state religion in 301. This highly significant event occurred more than a decade before the Romans adopted Christianity and further exacerbated the tense relations between Christian Armenia and Zoroastrian Persia.¹ As a consequence of embracing Christianity, Armenia's political stance tilted toward the West, making her an ally of the Roman Empire.

As early as the first century, Christianity had infiltrated Armenia through its western frontiers—in the south (Edessa) by Syrian and in the north (Cappadocia), by Greek missionaries. Christianity was spread by means of the Greek and Aramaic languages; it was spreading among the aristocracy rather than the common people, since the former were familiar with these languages. Among the Armenian converts, who later became illustrious hagiographers, were highly placed people of noble birth. On the other hand in Rome, Christian communities consisted of recently arrived Jews and Greeks, speaking Greek in a Latin world and living in dismal conditions in slums of the city. Reaching the Roman emperors was an arduous task indeed. Driven by internal political considerations they, nonetheless, acknowledged the growing power of

Christianity, and in 313 in Nicomedia, signed an edict recognizing the rights of Christians.

According to legend, the first missionaries arriving in Armenia were Thadeus and Bartholomew, who, as the Gospel attests, were among the Twelve Apostles of Christ. Hence, the Armenian Church is called *Apostolic*. They entered Armenia from the south and, although confronted by major obstacles, were able to spread Christ's teachings and the Gospel.²

Certain echoes of the missionary activities of Thadeus and Bartholomew have been preserved in Armenian letters and ancient traditions, in the form of separate hagiographic narratives entitled "Apostle Thadeus and Virgin Sandukht" (*Tadeos arakial yev Sandukht kuis*) and "The Legend and Martyrdom of Voskiant and Sukiasiants" (*Voskiant yev Sukiasiants avandutiunn u nahatakutiune*), confirming the apostolic origin of the Armenian Church.³ It is further discussed in the works of fifth-century Armenian historians Pavstos Buzand and Movses Khorenatsi.

In the following centuries, the innumerable persecutions and martyrdoms suffered by Armenians did not prevent the spread of Christian ideology in the land of Armenia; if anything, they had the opposite effect. Toward the end of the third century, by the time of the advent of Gregory the Illuminator, Armenians were already quite familiar with this new religion and its doctrine. This familiarity laid the foundation for Gregory the Illuminator and King Trdat to establish Christianity—albeit after enormous difficulties—as the official state religion of Armenia by the end of the third century or the beginning of the fourth.

Grigor Partev (c. 239-325), who later came to be known as *Lusavorich* (Illuminator), was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in Armenia. He is the most revered evangelizer among Armenians and, after him, Armenians have called themselves *lusavorchakanner* (lusavorichians). Descendant of a prominent Parthian family, he received his higher education in Caesarea, converted to Christianity, and came to Armenia. There he accepted a position at the Arshakuni Court in Vagharshapat but, because of his proselytizing activities, was banished by King Trdat III and imprisoned in the Araratian Valley, near the city of Artashat, in a deep pit called *Khor Virap*. According to tradition, after thirteen years of captivity, Gregory

was freed and, together with King Trdat, converted the country to Christianity, destroying centuries-old pagan temples and culture in the process.⁴ The Armenian king intended to distance his country from Rome as a consequence of the annexation of some Armenian territories by Rome in 297. More importantly, Trdat wanted to eradicate the power of pagan priests who were sympathetic to the Persians.

Hence the establishment of Christianity brought about fundamental changes to Armenia, which became the first Christian nation in the world. Although the new religious ideology began to be propagated through preaching, it did not turn into widespread conviction or faith among the people. The new faith prevailed because it was imposed by royal edict; the adoption of Christianity was a political decision, obeyed by government officials and the nobility. Artashes Martirosian writes:

It is difficult to find another country where vestiges of the old faith were resurrected in the new one as it was among Armenians. On ruins of pagan temples, houses of worship for the new God were erected; sons of the pagan priests became servants of the cross-bearing God; monster-slaying Vahagn became St. George; and, Vardavar was transformed into the day of Transfiguration of Our Lord; hymns of Mithra became prayers to the glory of God; songs of sunrise turned into church hymnals; and pagan sacrifices became Christian offerings.⁵

By the fourth century, the Armenian Apostolic Church achieved considerable temporal power and entered into conflict with the ruling royalty. This conflict led to substantial disturbances and some bloody clashes. By the fifth century the situation changed. The evolving political relationship forced church and state to adopt a unified posture in order to secure the very survival of the country.

From its inception, the Armenian Church maintained a permanent and reciprocal association with the Syrian and Byzantine Churches. In the beginning of the fifth century this bond was stronger between Armenians and Assyrians. But when Nestorians—through Syrian church functionaries and aided by Persians—became involved in internal affairs of the Armenian Church in the eastern provinces, Armenians resisted this interference and approached the Byzantine

Church.⁶ In 451 when the Council of Chalcedon was being held, Armenians were preoccupied with national-religious conflicts with the Persians; therefore, they did not attend the Council meetings. Later, at the Ecclesiastical Council of Dvin, they rejected the decisions reached in Chalcedon in order to maintain the religious independence of the Armenian Church, based on their professed theological doctrines.⁷

By the end of the fifth century, when Vahan Mamikonian was appointed *margrave* (485), the Church grew considerably more stable. In the next century it had already gained prominence among monophysite churches of the Near East.

Internally, however, the Armenian Church was not homogeneous. There were three diverse forces pulling its leadership in as many directions.

In the struggle for spiritual leadership of fourth to fifth century Armenia, main rivals to the descendants of Gregory the Illuminator were the Aghbianosians who, according to Agatangeghos, were descendants of pagan priests. They were often appointed as overseers to the royal household or assumed the responsibilities of Armenia's archbishopric. The heirs of Gregory the Illuminator were more inclined toward the Greeks and intolerant of Persia or of the Armenian Arshakuni kings who were sympathetic to Persia. Consequently, as the political climate of Armenia tipped toward the Eastern Roman Empire, namely the Byzantines, the pontifical seat was occupied by the Gregorians. But as sympathies turned to the Persians, the Aghbianosians came to power and their political activities lasted until the second half of the fifth century. Thus the conflict within the Church between foreign and indigenous factions continued. "The issue was Hellenism and reality," writes Martirosian. "The Aghbianosian church could not turn Christianity into conviction and direct it against existing conditions... . It was impeded by its own legacy, which was unresponsive to Western culture."⁸ Within the Armenian Church, the Syrian faction also exerted some influence. Its representative was Daniel the Syrian (fourth century). The pro-Syrian faction occupied the pontifical seat especially after the second half of the fifth century, following the collapse of the Arshakuni dynasty. Persian kings preferred Syrian ecclesiastics. During this period two Syrians, Brkisho and Shmuel, became Armenia's vicars. Each of these three factions took a different stance toward the Armenian Church. The Aghbianosians, although Armenian by birth but being of a pagan priestly

clan, were restricted by the power of their tradition towards the Christian faith. Syrian clerics could not be part of the Armenian people because of their ties to the Syrian Church. Therefore, only the heirs of Gregory were able to cement Christian ideology and interest with the notion of Armenian statehood and "under the cover of church, create a national Christian culture."⁹

* * *

The rivalry between Rome and Persia over Armenia became sharper and more pronounced as Constantine the Great (c. 285-337) established the Eastern Roman Empire. On the other hand, the Sassanids of Persia, who were enjoying political-military ascendancy and were trying to regain the glory and boundaries of the Achaemenid dynasty, made several attempts to capture Armenia, especially during the reign of Shahpur II (310-379). This protracted conflict ended in 387, with the collapse of Armenia's independence and unity and its division between Byzantium and Persia. The western provinces of Armenia were taken over by Byzantium; the eastern provinces by Persia where, until 428, the Arshakunis were able to maintain a semi-autonomous existence. This however, was not the end. Both Byzantium and Persia were not satisfied by the mere dismemberment of Armenia. They had plans to assimilate the population gradually by enforcing their laws, language, and faith.

In addition to their policy of oppressive taxation, the Persians resorted to mandatory religious conversion: Christianity had to be replaced by Zoroastrianism. Similarly, Byzantium made attempts to annex permanently the Armenian Church to the Church of Chalcedon. This would strengthen Byzantium's political and ideological hold upon the subjugated peoples and facilitate their eventual assimilation. It was obvious that the Armenian Church did not wish to assume the theological posture of Chalcedon, since such a move was tantamount to becoming completely subservient to Byzantium. Consequently, after the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431), the Church of Armenia declared itself "monophysite" in complete opposition to Byzantium's "dyophysite" theological stance. This move was not so much to stress theological differences between the two churches as it was an affirmation by the Armenians of their national-religious independence. Indeed, from the 450s to the 470s, Christendom was engulfed in fierce

theological arguments regarding Christ's nature (e.g., did Christ have one or two natures?); arguments that divided world Christianity along politico-theological lines and led to two opposing camps.¹⁰

Since Armenia was partitioned between East and West, for the preservation of its political unity, it was essential for Christianity to fully develop, to become its unifying force—its support. Although Armenians had been converted for more than a century, Christianity, nevertheless, had not penetrated every corner of the country or established itself firmly in Armenian life. In Western Armenia, church services and religious studies were conducted in Greek; in Eastern Armenia, in Syriac. The same conditions prevailed in schools where the dominant languages of instruction were Greek and Syriac. To avoid undermining the Church, it was necessary to conduct religious and church services in Armenian, rather than foreign languages which were incomprehensible to the masses. On the other hand, Armenian intellectuals who were studying in Greek or Syrian institutions, acquiring foreign education, eventually became alienated to Armenian culture. The means for self-assertion and the inner bastion of struggle against all these were turning out to be the Church of Armenia and Christianity. Particularly in the Eastern region, the firm establishment of Christianity was regarded as a political stand against Zoroastrian Persia. In addition, Christianity as a new religious philosophy also enhanced Armenia's cultural development, since through it Armenians became acquainted with the Christian culture and literature of Byzantium and Syria.

Consequently, by the fifth century, as Christian doctrine was gaining national and political significance, its philosophy had to be made comprehensible to the Armenian population as well. This imported alien doctrine being preached in foreign languages could not serve as a political and ideological foundation for the masses. It was essential for the Church to become Armenianized and turn into a national church. The early Christian evangelists, including Gregory the Illuminator, were of foreign background. They were not born in an Armenian environment nor did they belong to that environment. Their activities were limited to the religious sphere. The notion of nationalism was unnatural to them since Christian doctrine taught that all followers of Christ are his children, that faith in this world and reward in the hereafter are equally imparted without regard to race or national origin. Although by the fourth century the Armenian Church was undergoing reforms, it saw no

need for the creation of a national alphabet. Greek and Syriac seemed completely satisfactory. Yet, these languages were incomprehensible to the common folk who lived as pagans in an officially Christian country.

By the fifth century, political conditions had changed. Armenia's survival was in question. Thus the clergy was forced to find a solution in order to save the national language, the church, the country, and the culture. Fortunately, the penetration of hellenic culture and the Greek language (allied with the Greek Church) into Armenia, did not have sufficient impact to strengthen already existing hellenistic inclinations; otherwise, it would have sowed hatred towards the indigenous tongue and culture, as became the case with a number of tiny European peoples. It is remarkable that in a small country such as Armenia, where the church language was Syriac and Greek, where the country was divided between two foreign states, both pursuing a policy of linguistic, religious, and cultural assimilation, the native clergy found enough strength and will to survive and were able to create an alphabet and literature to meet their own needs. Armenian clerics realized that more than political safeguards, they needed to create spiritual and cultural *loci standi*.¹¹

The most important factors were the Armenian alphabet and literature because these were the instruments through which the independence of the Church, amid diverse religious teachings, could be secured. It is important to note that intellectuals of the time, who were mostly clerics and eager to develop an alphabet, were not moved entirely by political considerations. Their foremost motivation was religious since the ideological debate of the period took place within the context of religion. This is a phenomenon that is clearly documented in Armenian, Greek, Syrian, and Persian primary sources of the time. "Invention of the Armenian alphabet," writes Manandian, "in Armenia, as among the Goths and Slavonic peoples, was primarily designed to create a Christian literature in the native tongue."¹² The same opinions are also expressed by Leo and Abeghian.

The Armenian Church was anxious to create a Christian literature in Armenian. This would reinforce not only teachings of the Armenian Church against "false" and "faulty" doctrines but also through Christianity would strengthen national feelings and arouse national consciousness. In this respect, Christianity has had exceptional significance in Armenia's destiny. In Europe, the advent of Christianity

led to the adoption of Latin, the language and alphabet of the new religion. European countries felt no need to create their own alphabets. They adopted the Latin script and from the eighth to thirteenth centuries produced their national languages, while the Church retained Latin.¹³ This issue could not be solved as easily among the Armenians. There were national as well as political issues to be addressed. Furthermore, the Greek and Syriac alphabets were not suitable to the linguistic intricacies and needs of the Armenian language. It was therefore imperative to invent a unique alphabet suitable to the Armenian language. This patriotic task was undertaken by a group of eminent intellectuals, led by Mesrop Mashtots. The story of this feat is told by approximately thirty ancient and medieval sources (the Armenian historians Koriun, Movses Khorenatsi, Ghazar Parpetsi, Movses Kaghankatvatsi, and many others).

MESROP MASHTOTS was born some time between 361 and 364 in Hatsekats in the province of Taron, Armenia. He was educated in a Greek school. After mastering the Greek language and hellenic culture, Mesrop came to the capital and was hired by the Arshakuni royal house as a secretary, while still perfecting his military training. Shortly thereafter, in 394 he became a celibate clergyman, devoted himself to asceticism, and began to preach in various provinces of Armenia. Choosing the "lawless and disorderly sections" of Goghtn, Mashtots started preaching the Bible with great difficulty. He was forced to translate the Bible extemporaneously into Armenian since the common people could not understand either the Greek or Syriac texts. This state of affairs caused considerable anxiety to Mashtots, not only from a religious but also from a national point of view. He was acutely aware that in Persian-controlled Armenian provinces the influence of Persian was gradually increasing, while in provinces controlled by Byzantium, Greek had become the language of both state and church. Mashtots was well aware of social conditions prevalent throughout his divided country; he was convinced that the very survival of Armenians was at stake since factors that perpetuate human collectivities, such as schools, religious institutions, social mores, language, and culture, were in imminent danger of being subjected to assimilation and eventual disappearance.

According to Martirosian, a respected modern scholar, Mashtots chose monastic life not only with a view to spread Christianity but also

“with the intention of fighting Zoroastrianism” because at the time, “paganism was not as much a threat as the Persian religion” (i.e., Zoroastrianism).¹⁴ It was this concern that led Mashtots to search for an alphabet.

During the difficult years of proselytizing, accompanied by his students in Goghtn and other parts of the country, Mashtots became convinced that the language of the church and the language of instruction in schools should be Armenian, the people’s own language. Only this language, endowed with its own alphabet, could become the anchor of unity between divided sectors of the land, could fortify Armenianism and the national culture, and could rescue its people from assimilation. The historical importance of this vital task drove Mashtots to devote his energies to accomplishment of this national objective. Consequently, he went to Vagharshapat where, together with Catholicos Sahak Partev, he met King Vramshapuh and informed the monarch of his intentions. Vramshapuh mentioned that in Mesopotamia there was a Syrian bishop named Daniel, who had already invented letters for Armenian. Vahrich, a young man, was sent to obtain the script.

Mashtots and Sahak, elated by the discovery of Daniel’s alphabet, immediately put it to use in schools. Soon, however, they were convinced that this script was not phonetically compatible with Armenian, and, according to Koriun and Khorenatsi, “had no correlation with Armenian.”

Again, it became necessary to create an Armenian alphabet. In this endeavor Mashtots received assistance from the Arshakuni king Vramshapuh and Catholicos Sahak Partev. Mashtots and his students left for the Syrian cities of Amid, Edessa, and Samosata and, after lengthy and laborious toil, produced the Armenian alphabet in 404-406.

“Thus,” writes Koriun, Mesrop Mashtots “endured many hardships in order to do good for his nation. The all-giving God allowed him this opportunity. With his holy right hand, like a father, he gave birth to new and wondrous beings, the Armenian characters. He soon notated, named, and organized them and composed in syllables and conjunctions.”¹⁵

After assigning names to the letters of the alphabet and determining their numerical values (the first ten letters of the alphabet correspond to the numbers one through ten; the values then increase in tens, then hundreds, etc.), Mashtots entrusted them to Hropanos of

Samosata, an expert in Greek, who was to polish and perfect the design of the characters. Subsequently, with the help of two students, Hovhan Yekeghetsatsi and Hovsep Paghnatsi, Mashtots immediately translated Solomon's *Proverbs*, which assured him that the new characters were perfect. In 406, he returned home to Vagharshapat, "happier than the Prophet Moses descending Mt. Sinai," wrote Koriun. Here the king and his subjects welcomed them with pomp and ceremony and with deep-felt joy celebrated Mashtots' magnificent invention. The alphabet, bearing the name of its inventor and still in use, immortalized Solomon's dictum, "That men may know wisdom and instruction, understand words of insight," (Proverbs 1:2) an admonition followed by Armenians throughout later centuries.

This unique alphabet is composed of thirty-six letters (twenty-eight consonants and eight vowels). With utmost precision it reproduces the Armenian language's entire phonetic range.¹⁶ There have been ongoing studies regarding issues related to the existence of pre-fifth century Armenian script and literature, characteristics of the alphabet, questions surrounding Daniel's alphabet, the relationship between the Armenian alphabet and that of other languages, and so forth. Researchers have concluded that Mashtots' primary source of inspiration was the Greek alphabet, since the Armenian alphabet has some obvious resemblances to the Greek, not only in form but also in sequence and in phonetic organization. Like Greek and unlike Persian and Syriac, Armenian is written from left to right. According to Acharian, twenty-one letters are derived from Greek, fifteen from various other sources.¹⁷ He is certain that Daniel's characters are not part of the Mesropian alphabet, so that the credit and right of authorship belongs entirely to Mesrop Mashtots.

Mashtots had well-founded reasons to resort to the Greek alphabet in development of the Armenian script. Since the Hellenistic period, Greek letters, language, and culture had played a significant role in the cultural life of Armenians. The same Hellenism, now within a Christian context, was making cultural and ideological inroads which Armenians admired and always preferred.

* * *

Immediately following invention of the alphabet, there was a great flurry of instructional activities in Armenia. This enormous undertaking could only materialize with the concerted efforts of Catholicos Sahak Partev, King Vramshapuh, and Mesrop Mashtots. With a group of gifted students, Mashtots traveled from village to village and town to town, established schools, prepared teachers, and carried out significant pedagogic and translation-related activity in the eastern as well as western parts of the country. In the Byzantine section, i.e., Western Armenia, local authorities resisted his efforts because they were opposed to the replacement of Greek schools with Armenian educational institutions. Undaunted, Mashtots went to Byzantium, met with Emperor Theodosius and Patriarch Atticus, and received permission to open Armenian schools.

Mesrop Mashtots was also concerned about the issues of education and literacy of neighboring peoples. A testimony of his concern is the fact that he journeyed to Georgia and Aghvank (Caucasian Albania), where he created alphabets for each language.¹⁸

Thus, step by step, overcoming all obstacles, Mashtots became successively a teacher, author, translator, preacher, and researcher, immortalizing his name within Armenian literature.

On 17 February 440 Mashtots died. He was buried with great honors in a village not far from modern-day Yerevan called Oshakan which has since become a shrine, a place of pilgrimage for all Armenians. Three years after his death a church was erected on his burial site by the Armenian commanders Vahan Amatuni and Hmayiak Mamikonian. Meanwhile, the Armenian Church canonized him.

Mashtots also was a prolific writer. He wrote sermons, lectures, and sacred songs. He composed a Greek anthology, which he later translated into Armenian.¹⁹

Among the Armenian national and religious notables of the fifth century, *SAHAK PARTEV* (348-439) is especially outstanding. He was educated in the schools of Caesarea and Byzantium. Later he returned to Armenia and in the year 387 was ordained Catholicos.

Sahak Partev was instrumental in enhancing the authority of church and state and in the development of art and literature. He wrote *Kanonk* (Laws), a work composed of 55 articles in which sacred and

secular issues and family and marriage laws were discussed. These, in later centuries, were adopted by the courts to become the laws of the land. Sahak Partev also made significant contributions toward the creation and training of a well educated clergy and intelligentsia.

Basing themselves upon Armenian traditions, Sahak Partev together with Mesrop Mashtots edited a book of rites and blessings called *Mashtots*, wrote prayers, church hymnals, and a liturgy book.²⁰ Sahak Partev also actively participated in translation of the Greek Bible into Armenian. Based on interests of the Armenian Church, Sahak Partev wrote numerous doctrinal epistles against Nestorians and Borborites.

It is appropriate to mention here comparisons made between Mashtots and Partev on the one hand, and the German religious illuminators Pepin and Winfred on the other, by German Armenologist Joseph Markwart:

If we were to compare the above work with the Danaide's gift given to the Germans by Pepinos Frank while he enjoyed the full advantages offered by political and religious institutions, then Pepinos and his comrade Winfred would appear as poor midgets next to those giants of the mind. A people [i.e., the Armenians] that can produce such men, look upon them as demi-gods, and follow their example, cannot possibly be annihilated, regardless of the opposition of Turks, Kurds, Tatars, Persians, and all the great powers.²¹

Thus, the invention of the alphabet was a momentous event for Armenians. It not only acquired an ecclesiastical-historical but also national-cultural significance.²² More than nationalizing spiritual and temporal values, the Armenian Church rendered them holy. The alphabet was regarded as a heavenly gift. Khorenatsi described it as a divine vision. Thanks to the inventions of a script and literature, Armenians became one of the unique peoples who not only preserved their Christian sentiments and their independent church but were also able to create valuable historiographical and literary works in their own language, hence occupying a merited niche in the annals of world culture.

4. The Hellenizing School and Religious Literature

By the time Armenians developed their alphabet and began to write in the Armenian language, neighboring peoples already possessed mature literatures from which Armenians learned a good deal. During the fourth century the Armenian clergy were already well aware of the genres and types of Christian literature. It was only necessary that all this be Armenianized. In other words, it had to be translated into Armenian since the initial goals of Armenian literature were connected to exigencies of the enrooting and spread of Christianity. Those erudite intellectuals, whom it became customary to call the “senior” translators and who received their education outside of Armenia in the great centers of Syrian and Greek culture, worked towards this goal. Among them were Mesrop Mashtots, Catholicos Sahak Partev, Hovsep Vayotsdzoretsi, Ghevond Yerets, Yeznik Koghbatsi, Koriun, Hovhan Khostovanogh, Mushe Taronetsi, Hovhan Yekeghetsatsi, and Stepanos Taronetsi.

The assimilation of the Old and New Testaments and the legacy of the Holy Fathers was widespread and obligatory in ancient times for nearly all Christian peoples, which makes the similarities and universality of their literary forms understandable. This explains why Christian nations, on the threshold of creating their own distinct belles lettres, turned to literature in translation and appropriated as their own creations of renowned Greek and Syrian authors. They became familiar with the concepts, literary genres, and aesthetics of that literature. In order to accomplish this, Armenian cultural life had to have attained sufficient maturity and rationality on a spiritual and scholarly level. Fortunately, erudition shown in the field of translational literature of those centuries, reflecting a wide range of scientific and cultural interests, confirms one thing: that Armenian society of the fifth to sixth centuries possessed mature intellectual ability and was capable of

absorbing everything which Greek culture had created over long centuries. The best example of this is the Armenian translation of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible—Solomon's *Proverbs*, the *Pentateuch* of Moses, the Books of Prophecy, the Epistles of the Apostles, and the Gospels—on the artful rendering of which the famous English Armenologist Frederick Conybeare wrote with admiration: "... for beauty of diction and accuracy of rendering the Armenian cannot be surpassed ... [this] version has almost the same value for us as the original Greek text itself...."¹

The Bible, at first translated from Syriac (A.D. 405-408), was reexamined after the Council of Ephesus (431), and emended in accordance with the original Greek texts by Sahak Partev, Mesrop Mashtots, and their students Yeznik Koghbatsi, Hovsep Paghnatsi, Koriun, Hovhan Yekeghetsatsi, and Ghevond Vanandetsi.² This text has survived to the present and has been recognized as the "queen of translations" for its unsurpassed perfection (this is Maturin V. La Croze's expression).

Martin Luther's translation of the holy scriptures in the sixteenth century is considered the beginning of contemporary Germany. It is possible to say the same about the translation of the Armenian Bible, which opened a new era in the fifth century for Armenian intellectual, moral, and spiritual ideas and once and for all closed the legendary pages of suspect stories, rites, and the power of the pagan gods. In every way, the translation of the Bible played an important role in Armenian intellectual life. Indeed, Armenian literature began with this translation. Through it the Christian spirit, with its entire evangelical and philosophical capacity, penetrated into the consciousness of the Armenian people, and as a textbook or primer it led towards other nations' civilizations. With its stories, songs, and Christian traditions, with its complete qualitative and quantitative contents, the Bible fashioned a compelling mentality about life, past and present, and at the same time inspired hope for Armenians to endure and persevere. This influence was so profound and persuasive that all Armenian culture was consumed by it. It produced a spiritual, vital thought process, which dictated a way of life, style, behavior, and education. The Bible liberated the Armenian mind from local and folk traditions and broadened its horizons, casting doubt upon traditional pagan miracles.

"The Latin Vulgate," (authorized text of the Old and New Testaments for the Roman Catholic Church), wrote the historian Nikoghayos Adonts, "did not have the same importance for Latin countries that the Armenian Bible had for the Armenian people. Latin literature already was in existence for a long time when the Vulgate appeared. As for the Armenian Bible, it marked the beginning of a new era, when the Armenian people, for the first time learning use of the pen, came to take its place in human civilization."³

The Holy Scripture's influence was great on Armenian letters and historiography.⁴ Many stories and themes from the Old and New Testaments were adopted. These were tied to Armenian folklore (Noah's Ark, the story of Sanasar) or reworked by Armenian writers in later centuries and became works of art—for instance, Grigor Magistros's *Hazartoghian* (Thousand Lines), Nerses Shnorhali's *Hisus vordi* [Jesus the Son), Arakel Siunetsi's *Adamgirk* (Book of Adam), *Drakhtagirk* (Book of Paradise), Martiros Ghrimetsi's *Voghb Yereimia margarein* (The Lamentation of the Prophet Jeremiah). In addition to this, the Armenian language of the Bible, which blossomed into classical maturity, educated generations, and improved and embellished written literature, whether it was religious, historical, or poetical. Church or liturgical Armenian, developed and polished through translations, turned into a literary language called *grabar* which was used in the fifth century to create works having historical and literary value.⁵ *Grabar*, which is also called Classical Armenian, developed over centuries, undergoing changes, but it fundamentally kept that linguistic structure with which the first Armenian translators wrote.⁶

Besides the Bible, the clerics also Armenianized Christian traditional writings: homilies, commentaries, canons, patristic literature dealing with fathers of the church, martyrologies, and *vitae*.⁷ A series of works by Christian authors were translated from Greek and Syriac such as Ephraem Syrus's *Commentaries on the Old Testament*, "the Persian Sage" Aphrahat's *Homilies* (incorrectly ascribed to Jacob of Nisibis by some), John Chrysostom's *Commentary on Saint John*, Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catecheses*, Basil of Caesarea's *Homilies*, and many works of Proclus, Evagrius of Pontus, Ephraem Syrus (the Syrian), and Gregory of Nazianzen (Nazianzenus).

Exegetical literature which defended and vindicated Christian learning against the ancient world's philosophical conceptions and

paganism grew considerably. In this area, Armenian translators Armenianized works of the Christian writers Aristides the Athenian, Hippolytus, Methodios of Olympus, Epiphanius of Cyprus, and others. It is possible to divide the translated literature of the first half of the fifth century into the following groups:⁸

- a. liturgical works (missal, breviary)
- b. patristic literature (the Church Fathers' religious and philosophical discourses, sermons, epistles)
- c. martyrology and *vitae* (the lives and works of famous Church Fathers)
- d. canonical literature (canons, prescriptions)
- e. historical literature.

This literature in translation, created within a short period of time, was derived from the work of Greek and Syrian Christian authors. It had a theological content and laid the basis for and defended Christian philosophy, which often was directed against opposing teachings. The illustrious Church Fathers' Christian philosophy and way of life were praised, and church and communal life issues were elucidated.⁹ At the same time, together with these translations, through the united efforts of Sahak Partev, Mesrop Mashtots, Yeznik Koghbatsi, Koriun and others, Armenian spiritual songs, canons, exegeses, canticles, psalms, *sharakans* (hymns), and many other ecclesiastical creations were brought to life. The Christian tradition in all its venerability also appeared in liturgical forms. To that aim, the missal and prophetic blessings were translated, rites were adopted, and the divine liturgy was Armenianized, enriching Christian worship. The first distinctively Armenian historical and philosophical works, such as Agatangeghos's *Patmutiun hayots* (History of the Armenians), Koriun's *Vark Mashtotsi* (Life of Mashtots), a collection of extensive homilies known as *Hachakhapatum charer* (Stromatis), and the philosophical treatise of Yeznik often entitled the *Yeghtz aghandots* (Refutation of Sects), were produced based on the examples set by translated literature.

It is necessary to note that the first translators were also well versed in the Armenian language. One can marvel that Armenian literature, which originated in the sphere of translational activity, began at the high linguistic level of fifth-century Golden Age Armenian. The Armenian script was invented only fifty to seventy years earlier, yet

translators brought forth such literary wealth that Armenian already appears as a rich and solid language endowed with profound imagery and flexibility. In the opinion of linguists, this language was not created all at once. The more than 3,000-year-old Armenian language, has traveled over a long path of development and crystallization (through song, poetry, cultural relations, oral translations, and so forth). It already possessed, by the fifth century A.D., a rich aesthetic and etymological vocabulary which was capable of serving Armenian historians in the creation of works of literary value. The conclusion is that the spoken language was not very different from the Armenian used as a literary language by fifth-century historians and writers.

The work of "senior" translators was continued by "junior" translators who, unlike the elder generation, were engaged in translation of scholarly rather than religious literature. In the second half of the fifth century they founded the so-called *Hellenizing school*, which flourished in the sixth century and lasted until the seventh.¹⁰ The Hellenizing school brought about a revolution in intellectual culture. Its followers, by their translations of literary, philosophical, and scholarly works, were trying to introduce into Armenia the poetic erudition, scholarship, and linguistic and aesthetic conceptions of the Greeks. The rebirth of Hellenism in Armenia in the fifth to sixth centuries focused a great deal of attention and interest on all aspects of the old world's knowledge, including rhetoric, grammar, philosophy, and led to translation of works by the ancient world's writers. Olympian's and Ahikar the Wise's proverbs, Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Alexander Romance* and *Bestiary* were translated from belles lettres.

As has been noted, one of the chief concerns of the Hellenizing school was the examination of grammatical issues. Although grammar in those centuries did not form a separate branch of knowledge, it was a field linked to literary, aesthetical, and artistic questions. In Hellenistic times certain linguistic and grammatical knowledge had already penetrated into Armenia from Greece. Later it spread widely when Armenian contact with Byzantine culture was strengthened due to the acceptance by both countries of Christianity. The two schools of grammar among the Greeks, Pergamum's "philosophized" stoical and the Alexandrian grammatical school, were probably founded in the Hellenistic period. Aristarchos's student Dionysius Thrax (second-first centuries B.C.) presented for the first time a scholarly, ordered treatise

on grammar of the Alexandrian school in his *Ars Grammatica* (Art of Grammar). This famous work served as the basis of grammar not only in the Byzantine world but also neighboring countries. The Armenian translation of the book, thought to have been carried out by Davit Anhaght,¹¹ served for centuries as a textbook in Armenian schools and was the subject throughout a millenium of a multitude of commentaries by Armenian intellectuals.¹²

Works from the ancient period and those of Armenian grammarians, like this treatise, were not as yet differentiated from philology, literature, and art. Here questions of rhetoric and aesthetics were being examined; as well as the understanding of the beautiful and the grotesque, of tragedy and farce as aesthetical conceptions of good and evil, of the sublime and the base, positing standards of criticism and appraisal. From this point of view, Davit Kerakan's (David the Grammarian, fifth century A.D.) *Meknutiun Kerakanin* (Scholia on the Grammarian) is one of the most illustrious studies of ancient Armenian aesthetics. In it he examines the relations of art and reality. Davit Kerakan divides art into the theoretical and the practical, which in turn are divided into good, evil, and mediocre arts. He rejects the evil and mediocre, and seeks only the characteristic of usefulness as the foundation of art. In reaction to Dionysius Thrax's empiricism, Davit Kerakan establishes the rational nature of art.

The study of grammar in general developed in a philological and aesthetic sense during the sixth and seventh centuries in the late Hellenistic period, creating a separate branch of knowledge which shaped ideas about the perception of art in Armenia. Movses Kertogh, Ananun Meknich, and later Stepanos Siunetsi, Hamam Areveltsi, Grigor Magistros, Yesayi Nchetsi and others became its proponents. After the translation of Dionysius Thrax's *Grammar* at about the end of the fifth century, an important work of Hellenistic aesthetics and rhetoric—*Pitoyits girk* (Book of Chreiai) which basically contains the works of Aphthonios (fourth century), Theon of Alexandria (third century), and Nikolaos of Myra the Sophist (fifth century)—was translated. Theon of Alexandria's famous work *Progymnasmata* was also translated during the same period.¹³ Together with *Book of Chreiai* it introduced rhetorical taste and knowledge to Armenian intellectual circles, giving them ideas about issues of rhetorical art, the theory of art, and debate.

The Armenian translations of the works of one of the most famous figures of the Hellenistic world, Philo Judaeus (first century A.D.), have left a significant mark on Armenian philosophy and literature. They are considered the oldest of Armenian translations of philosophical works. Their influence is noticeable even on works by fifth-century Armenian authors Yeghishe, Mambre Vertzanogh, and Movses Khorenatsi, and later on the works of Anania Shirakatsi, Grigor Magistros, Hovhannes Sarkavag, and others.¹⁴ Of the Armenian philosophers, Hovhannes Sarkavag and Hovhannes Vorotnetsi even wrote exegeses on Philo's works.

Porphyry of Phoenicia's *Eisagoge*, Asclepius's *Definitions* (ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus), *On Nature* (attributed to the philosopher Zeno), and Olympiodorus's *Commentaries* on Aristotle's *Categories* are among the works translated from Greek in the fifth to sixth centuries.

The effect which translations of Aristotle's works had on Armenian intellectuals was especially strong in the sixth and succeeding centuries.¹⁵ These translations are faithful versions of the originals in their precision and have been highly praised by European philologists.¹⁶

In the fifth to sixth centuries, followers of the Hellenizing school translated into Armenian from among Aristotle's works his *Categories* and *On Interpretation* and Porphyry's famous *Eisagoge*, devoted to analysis of the *Categories*.¹⁷ Pseudo-Aristotle's *On the Cosmos* and *On Virtues and Vices* were also translated. These Armenian translations are the world's oldest and are well known for their authentic renditions of the originals. After being translated, these works were annotated by Armenian philosophers, thus creating a considerable literature. The fifth to sixth century Armenian philosopher Davit Anhaght ("David the Invincible") in his work *Definitions of Philosophy* introduced and interpreted Aristotle's epistemology and moral philosophy. He even dedicated studies to Aristotle's *On Interpretation* and the *Categories* and Porphyry's *Eisagoge*. The Armenian mathematician and natural scientist Anania Shirakatsi (seventh century), who in his *Cosmogony* analyzed natural philosophical and cosmological phenomena, also studied Aristotle. Philosophers of a later period, including Grigor Magistros (eleventh century), Hovhannes Sarkavag (eleventh to twelfth century), Grigor Tatevatsi (fourteenth century), Simeon Jughayetsi (sixteenth to

seventeenth century), and Stepanos Lehatsi (seventeenth century) have also borne Aristotle's influence.

After the translation of Aristotle's works, extensive commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* and *On Interpretation* ascribed to the Neoplatonist Iamblichus were translated. The philosophic influence of the ancient philosopher Plato on Armenian life is also notable. Its diffusion was greatly aided by the Armenian Hellenizers' translations of his works in the sixth century.¹⁸

It is clear that in the fifth to seventh centuries Neoplatonism was one of the most widespread tendencies in Armenian philosophy. Armenian students, after obtaining their education in centers of Greek learning such as Alexandria, Athens, and Constantinople, introduced Neoplatonism to Armenia and immediately began work on translations of Plato's dialogues *Laws*, *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, *Euthyphro*, *Meno*, and the *Apology*.¹⁹

In the late fifth and early sixth centuries appears Davit Anhaght, the Armenian philosopher. He wrote *Definitions of Philosophy* and erudite interpretations devoted to works of Aristotle and Porphyry's *Eisagoge*. Davit Anhaght was an important Neoplatonist whose works, mentioned above, were first written in Greek and then translated into Armenian in the mid-sixth century.

After Davit Anhaght, philosophy in Armenia to a noticeable degree became a separate field with its own issues, branches, and vocabulary. In the sixth to eighth centuries the Armenian philosophers Petros Siunetsi, Davit Harkatsi, Khosrovik Targmanich, Anania Shirakatsi, and Stepanos Siunetsi appeared. The latter wrote original philosophical and grammatical studies dedicated to interpretation of Davit Anhaght's *Definitions of Philosophy* and Dionysius Thrax's *Grammar*. Siunetsi also translated Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite's works. With Davit Hiupatos's aid he translated the Areopagite's voluminous works and his ten epistles.

Among the oldest translations of the fifth to eighth centuries are those about the natural sciences. These include the *Hexaemeron* (Commentary on the Six Days of Creation) by Basil of Caesarea, which is about cosmogony and astronomy; a section of Asclepiades's medical work; Pseudo-Aristotle's *On the Cosmos*; Nemesis of Emesa's *On*

Human Nature; and Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Creation of Man*—all of which are well known.

Anania Shirakatsi enriched the Armenian philosophical lexicon with vocabulary from natural science by translating the astronomical works of Pappus of Alexandria, Paul of Alexandria, and others.

Celebrated historiographical works occupy a special place among the ranks of books translated during these centuries. These include *Ecclesiastical History* and *Chronicle* by fourth-century Greek historian Eusebius of Caesarea (264-340), the first of which was translated from Syriac, and the second, from Greek. These two translations served as prototypes for Armenian historians, who created historiographical works based on their examples in the fifth century. The text of *Chronicle*, which is not preserved in Greek, is known to the scholarly world only in Armenian translation. Mkrtich Avgerian translated it in the beginning of the last century from *grabar* to Latin, making it the property of international literature.²⁰

The commentaries of Nonnus, of an historical, rhetorical, and legendary nature, also are of major significance. Their Armenian translations are more complete than the extant Greek texts.²¹ Through their translation Armenians became acquainted with ancient Greek history, mythology, tales, and traditions.

Hellenistic science, with its works on natural science, geography, mathematics, and calendrics brought about a revolution in Armenian intellectual life. The philosophic works of Aristotle, as well as third century A.D. Neoplatonic philosophy, brought Armenian philosophy to heights of quality, expanded the boundaries of religious thought, and burnished and enriched Armenian vocabulary. Although Classical Armenian appeared in its entire flexibility and richness in the translation of literary and historical material, it did not yet possess a precise and suitable vocabulary for the translation of scholarly, philosophical works, and was forced to create one. Thus, in order to Armenianize grammatical, philosophical, literary, and rhetorical material, the "junior" translators introduced from Greek into Classical Armenian many new words, concepts, and names. This was necessary to preserve semantic subtleties of the translated material. Neologisms were devised on the Greek pattern, and many prefixed words were created. A large number of these found a permanent place in the Armenian language. On the other hand, the Armenian of the Hellenizing school,

founded as it was on Greek grammar and syntax and having adopted foreign and awkward grammatical forms, often turned incomprehensible and dense.²² Nonetheless, the century-long activity of the Hellenizing school enriched the Armenian language to such a degree that it became capable, through its vocabulary, of expressing the most complicated philosophical, scientific, and linguistic formulations.

In the sixth century, the activity of the Hellenizing school, which began with translations of religious and ecclesiastical works, attained the realm of creation of artistic, secular literature; but, the Arab invasions halted its continued development.

Today, many of the Armenian translations of the ancient world's thinkers have acquired historical significance as texts because many of their originals have not been preserved. Others, after much copying in later centuries, became corrupted and abridged, losing their original value. It is because of this that the unaltered translations made from Greek to Armenian in the fifth to sixth centuries have become invaluable items.

Zeno the Stoic's *On Nature*; Asclepius's *Definitions* (ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus), Philo Judaeus's *Questions and Solutions Concerning Existence, On Johan, On Providence, Alexander, or That Dumb Animals Have Reason, and Preparation of Men Like Samson* (Philo's authorship of some of these works is still debated); Eusebius of Caesarea's *Chronicle* or *Universal History*; Porphyry's *Eisagoge*; Timothy Aelurus of Alexandria's *Refutation of the Council of Chalcedon*; Eusebius of Emesa's *Commentary on the Octateuch*; the correspondence of Akakios of Constantinople and Peter Mongos, as well as John Chrysostom, Ephraem Syrus (the Syrian), Hesychius of Jerusalem, Elias the Syrian, and many others' explicatory works and speeches are known to mankind only in their Armenian translations. "The cultural and historical significance of these translations of ancient authors," writes the philosopher Vazgen K. Chaloyian, "is that they were for the most part done before Arabs became familiar with them. Along with this, it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that the majority of Latin translations were carried out much later (not earlier than the tenth century) and not from original texts as among Armenians but from Arabic. However, it is known that the Arabs themselves benefited from Syriac translations, and from the service of those Syrians

who became the intermediaries between the Greek and Arab cultures just like the Spanish Jews later became intermediaries between the Arab and Latin cultures.”²³

The Hellenizing school was a significant phenomenon with its fecund activity, linguistic construction, and Armenianization of the Greek philosophical, natural, scientific, and artistic mind. The literary and translational work of this school not only had cultural aims but also tried to defend the Armenian people's intellectual and spiritual independence. Armeno-Greek relations were no longer friendly in the fifth to sixth centuries. The falling out had both political and religious causes. It was necessary to arrange it so that Armenian students received their education locally, in Armenia, and not leave for Byzantium. It was imperative to establish institutions of higher education in the land and to furnish them with scholarly, literary, and cultural material. Translations and original work of the Hellenizing school would help to construct those centers. And it is not amazing that higher institutions called “sources of wisdom,” where together with theological subjects “external studies” were taught, increased in tandem with the literacy schools in those centuries. Among these, the schools of Siunik, Mair, Shirak, Aragatzotn, and Arsharunik, where grammar, rhetoric, and natural science were taught are well known. Mastery of Hellenistic culture gave Armenians the means to defend the independence of the Armenian Church and to participate in confessional and religious disputes being waged between the Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians.

Thus, the works of the great thinkers of the ancient world as well as accomplishments of early Christian literature, scholarship, and philosophy offered spiritual sustenance and vigor to the Armenian people, who were eager to receive and adopt the art and philosophy of the culturally more advanced Greeks. This was something valuable with which Armenians were in touch from ancient times and adopted without mediated influences and translations; this cannot be said about many European countries, which only introduced the heritage of Greek philosophy and the secular spirit from later copies translated from Arabic or Latin.

The influence of Greek culture on Armenian life and literature decreased after the seventh century A.D. During the years following the Ecclesiastical Council of Dvin (554), the Armenian Church considered itself independent and separated from the Chalcedonian Church. The

weakening of religious ties also broke down cultural relations and interests, which continually diminished over the following centuries.²⁴

Despite confessional disagreements, the Armenian Church's relations with the Western Christian world were not cut off. In the twelfth century, through the Crusaders, Armenians came into contact with the theological and ritual traditions of the Roman Church. Armenian church fathers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries read and translated works by the giants of the Latin Church (St. Albert the Great, St. Gregory the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, and others), studied the foundations of theology, without, however, distancing themselves from their own doctrinal, missal, ritual, and spiritual conceptions. However, when the Roman Church tried to impose its laws and rites upon Armenians and its policies gradually passed beyond the realm of religion and intellect, the Armenian Church opposed it.

* * *

The revolution Christianity brought about expressed itself in human thought with such persuasiveness that it completely negated other beliefs and convictions. In order to uphold its theses the newly revealed religion created a literature and rites for its ceremonies. Translations of the Old and New Testaments and works of the Syrian and Greek theologians Ephraem Syrus, Gregory of Nazianzen, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, and others served as models for Christian literature and played an important role from the point of view of the development of genre, style, and religious ideas in church literature. It is by basing themselves on these models that later Christian peoples developed their own distinct literatures. Due to their common influence these literatures also bear certain similarities. Such commonalties are also explained by the cultural influence of the peoples from which they accepted Christianity. Since Armenians became Christian through contact with Syrians and Greeks, and they bore those people's cultural influences, the Armenian Christian Church and the literature it created naturally would have close connections and similarities to the Greek and Syrian, just as the Georgian had to the Armenian or Russian to the Bulgarian.²⁵

•

This doctrinal, exegetical, hagiological, homiletic, and polemical literature was established for a handful of chosen men who had the ability and knowledge to understand it. The people were satisfied merely with sermons and ceremonial rites. The *sermon* and *homily* were effective means for them. Together with *hymns*, in the third to fifth centuries they became the most widespread types of Armenian ecclesiastical literature until the appearance of doctrinal writings. Through original and translational means, the Armenian Church also established an apologetic literature directed against gnostic sects and heresies.²⁶ Epistles, papers, dialogues, and rhetorical volumes were written for proselytizing activity. Christian exegetical literature also developed, providing explanations to parts of the Holy Book difficult to understand.

Syriac literature, a coalescence of Syrian and Babylonian heritage and Jewish masterpieces, combined with Hellenistic art, left a great mark on Armenian literature in this earliest period of its development. During the first to fifth centuries a large number of Syrians lived in southern Armenia and later became assimilated by Armenians. Syrian preachers, craftsmen, and merchants visited Armenia and established reciprocative relations with Armenians. Jacob (or James) of Nisibis, Mar Augen, Daniel the Syrian, and other Christian "brothers" in the beginning of the fourth century came to Armenia and started preaching. They even founded schools in the south of Armenia. Information about local tales and contemporary historical events is found in stories about their lives. In the above mentioned centuries the Armenian Church established relations with the Syrian Church.²⁷ The study of the canons of the Armenian and Syrian Churches shows the influence exerted upon the Armenian by the Syrian. Research also reveals that these canons have an eastern, not a Greek, origin.²⁸

Finally, the translation and utilization of many Syrian *vitae* and martyrologies, the *Girk tghtots* (Book of Epistles), a collection containing correspondence between Armenian, Syrian, Greek, and Georgian clergymen, testify to Armeno-Syrian cultural and religious ties.²⁹

Oldest examples of a distinct Armenian literature date from the period A.D. 301 to 405, that is, from the Christianization of Armenians until invention of the alphabet, and are written in the Greek or Syriac languages. They consist primarily of the teachings, homilies, canons,

and prayers of Armenian clerics and Catholicoi—all of a spiritual and ecclesiastical nature—and material concerning rites and worship. Gregory the Illuminator, his son Vrtanes who replaced his brother the Catholicos Aristakes, Bishop Artit, Nerses Partev, and others whose names have not reached us, left a literary inheritance which gives an idea about fourth-century pagan worship and religious questions. Religious instructions and canons, written in Greek but translated into Armenian by fifth-century Armenian intellectuals, have reached us under Gregory the Illuminator's name. One of the canons composed in the form of questions and answers, *Kanon srbuin Grigori Partevi* (Canon of Saint Gregory the Parthian), gives explanations about popular beliefs and rites.

A rather rich religious and ecclesiastical literature developed in the Armenian language after invention of the alphabet. It included patristic literature (the moralistic and philosophical homilies, sermons, and epistles of the famous Church Fathers), martyrology and hagiography, and canonic literature (canons of Church Councils). Among these, *martyrologies* and *hagiographical* works clearly possess literary value.³⁰ These original works and translations opened the way for a true Armenian literature and became the basis for its development. Hagiography and martyrology devoted to the life and activity of Church Fathers play a big role in this legacy. A *vita* or work of hagiography is the life of a virtuous and holy ascetic who is consecrated to Christianity through penitence and austerity, whereas a martyrology is the story of martyrdom suffered in the name of Christianity. They often resemble each other in their contents, and it is difficult to differentiate one from the other.

Martyrologies were created in the period during which Christianity was subject to persecution. They often do not have a foreword or conclusion and tell events in chronological order from initial description of events until the hero's judgment and execution. Along with martyrologies, eulogies were dedicated to the martyrs in which the latter were extolled with rhetorical skill.

Hagiography played a more prominent role in the fourth century. Church Fathers, educated in centers of Greek culture in Alexandria, Antioch, and Edessa, had as useful models for this literary genre the principles of composition of classical biography, which they derived

from ancient Greek literature. Such is Gregory of Nazianzen's funeral oration written on the occasion of Basil of Caesarea's death, which left a great influence on all future hagiology. Biblical hagiology, in which figures from the Old and New Testaments are featured, belongs in the ranks of hagiological literature. Lives of Adam the Forefather, Cain, Abel, Noah the Patriarch, Job the Blessed, Seth, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron and Eliazar, Joshua, Samuel, and a host of others are collected under the title *Vark srbots nakhaharts* (Lives of the Holy Forefathers). Alongside the oldest of these *vitae* are found stories of the lives and deaths of the twelve (minor) prophets, *vitae* of the evangelists Luke, Matthew, Mark and John, the apostles John and Thomas, John the Baptist, Mary Magdalene, the archangels Gabriel and Michael, and others, of which some have a folk origin while others were episodes composed later.

Martyrological and hagiographical stories played an important role in early Christian centuries and were transmitted verbally, spreading everywhere. They yielded an abundant harvest in Armenian society, lasting until the eighteenth century.³¹ These hagiological works, which have a great value for specialists, were collected in the works *Harants vark* (Lives of the Fathers), *Vark srbots* (Lives of the Saints), *Charentirk* (Selected Homilies), and *Haismavurk* (Synaxarion) and served the preaching of Christian ideas. They are, in essence, historiographical memoirs, of which some are translations and the remainder deal with the lives of Armenian martyrs. These hagiographical works, at the core of which lay the story of selfless sacrifice of the Holy Father's life, were widespread in Byzantium and Assyria, especially during the early Christian period. According to the testimony of fourth-century Greek historian Eusebius of Caesarea, hagiography was a recognized genre in all Christian literatures.³² There is no doubt that Armenians were familiar with this literature before the invention of Armenian script in the fifth century. And since Christian ideas had already penetrated into Armenia from Syrian and Byzantine sources in the third to fourth centuries, it is understandable that the tales and stories concerning them would find wide circulation in Armenia.

Peter of Alexandria's martyrology, the *Life of Antony* which Athanasius of Alexandria wrote, Athanasius of Alexandria's biography written by his student Timothy of Alexandria, the *vitae* of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzen, the patriarch Jacob of Nisibis, John

Chrysostom, Sylvester, Cyril of Alexandria, and Cyril of Jerusalem, the *Martyrology of Saint Gordius of Caesarea*, *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* (pontiff of Smyrna), *The Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus* whose author is Gregory of Nyssa, and many other works relate lives of the first martyrs.

Works of hagiography and martyrology were known to Armenians through translations which were made first from Syriac, then from Greek. The heroes of the *vitae* mentioned possessed authority in Armenian society. They were known to Armenian translators who, in their works, testify to the period of creation of those *vitae* and about many matters related to the text and authors. In this way Armenian historians were as much aware of the works of the Fathers of the Byzantine Church as they were of the *vitae* of the Fathers in Syrian collections. For example, the section on Daniel in *History of the Armenians* by Pavstos Buzand (Book 3, Chapter 14),³³ the chapter devoted to Jacob of Nisibis (Book 3, Chapter 10),³⁴ and the episodes about Shaghita and Yepipan (Epiphanius) (Book 5, Chapter 25)³⁵ in the same work, and the section "the teaching of Adde"³⁶ in Movses Khorenatsi's *Patmutiun hayots* noticeably bear the imprint of Syrian *vitae*.

The influence on Agatangeghos of one of the Syrian martyrologies, that of Gorias and Shmona (fourth century), is also well known.³⁷ Sections taken from Syrian martyrologies, descriptions, and other borrowings exist in Yeghishe's *History*.³⁸ Armenian historians have benefited from the style and phrasing of the work *Martyrs of the East* (translated into Armenian in the fifth century from Syriac by Abraham Khostovanogh), which tells about persecutions endured by fourth-century Syrian Christians.

The *vitae* of the well known leader of the ascetic movement Mar Augén and that of Jacob of Nisibis, and the speeches of the Syrian author Aphrahat in his *Homilies* were also translated from Syriac to Armenian. They transmit information on fourth-century Armenian and Syrian historical and religious figures, Syrian preachers in Armenia, the first Ecumenical Council convened in Nicaea, and other topics.³⁹ The famous fourth-century writer of Syrian literature Ephraem Syrus, whose beautiful lyrical poems charmed readers, left his mark on Armenian literature too. Ephraem Syrus wrote, among other things, antiphons (spiritual songs) which were sung together with psalms. Fifty-one of

Ephraem's antiphons are only known thanks to their Armenian translations since the Syrian texts had been lost.⁴⁰ His poems under the title *Aghotk* (Prayers) and his commentaries on the Bible have also reached us.⁴¹

Armenian writers had a broad knowledge of Greek *vitae* too. Constantine's life story, according to Agatangeghos, not only was known throughout Armenia but also was commemorated through a special holiday by the Armenian Church. Khorenatsi mentions the *vitae* of Constantine together with that of his mother Helen,⁴² as does Ghazar Parpetsi.⁴³ Armenian historians also inserted or created episodes in Armenian history based on Syrian and Greek hagiographical models. Some examples in Pavstos's *History* are the episode of Husik's marriage, which reminds one of Alexianos's *vita*, or the composition on Catholicos Nerses's life in Book V, which resembles Irenaeus's *vita* in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*. There are also similarities in certain titles, expressions (those beginning with "Hainm zhamanaki" ["In those times"]), tables of contents, and prologues found before each chapter. On the other hand, Armenian historians would supplement martyrological stories with information from oral sources, too. For example, it is presumed that Pavstos Buzand had access to written or folk sources for the *vitae* of Husik, Vrtanes, and Nerses related in his work. Khorenatsi did the same thing. His story about King Abgar, the martyrology of Thadeus the Apostle, the story about the virgin Sandukht, as well as the story about Gregory the Illuminator taken from Agatangeghos are all augmented with folkloric material.

Many examples of hagiography are found not only in the works of fifth-century historians (Agatangeghos, Pavstos Buzand the author of *Epic Histories*, Movses Khorenatsi, Ghazar Parpetsi) but also in Armenian literature from its formative period, when hagiography was being created as a separate genre. While such works are religious creations, they are at the same time literary works endowed with literary elements. They reflect not only the life of the given Christian individual but also aspects of the period and environment in which he lived, revolving around the most important historical event for which the *vita*'s hero is the torchbearer.

The *vita* of Gregory the Illuminator, found in Agatangeghos's *Hayots patmutiun* (History of the Armenians), is one such work. The axis around which it revolves are events of the Armenians' acceptance

of Christianity and presentation of its historical significance. For Koriun, in his biography of Mesrop Mashtots, the pivot is the story of founding the Armenian alphabet and literature. Nerses Partev's *vita* was created in a similar way in the fifth century, while that of Vahan Goghntatsi was written during years of Arab domination.⁴⁴ The beautiful work *Vkayabanutium srbo Shushankann* (Martyrology of Saint Shushanik) appeared in the period of Persian domination (fifth century A.D.). Its heroine Shushanik devotes herself to the Christian faith with her delicate feminine, yet courageous, personality. There are numerous extensive and abbreviated editions of Shushanik's *vita*.⁴⁵

The martyrological sections in Agatangeghos and Pavstos Buzand, the Voskiants and Atovmians martyrologies, the martyrology introduced in Agatangeghos of the Hripsimians virgins, and the martyrdoms mentioned in works of Pavstos Buzand and Movses Khorenatsi of the apostle Thadeus and virgin Sandukht are also hagiographic records. Tradition relates that the apostle Thadeus came from Edessa to Armenia and preached the teachings of Christ. Many accepted Christianity, including Sandukht, daughter of the Armenian king Sanatruk. The pagan Sanatruk massacred all the Christians, including Thadeus and the virgin Sandukht. And the story of martyrdom was composed from this.⁴⁶

The heroes of *vitae* and martyrologies are at the same time perfect individuals and powerful ideal models. The goal of the writing thus becomes the revelation of this perfection. They are presented with great devotion, as sanctified missionaries. It is for this same reason that they appear one-dimensional and one-sided. These heroes are isolated from mankind, divorced from reality, and do not have a real life, since they live in an incorporeal and provisory world. And since the individual with his particular goals and ideas is placed in similarly special conditions, he thus becomes abstract.

On the other hand, these figures endowed with indomitable will and readiness for sacrifice are prepared to bear every type of torture, famine, and punishment by death without a murmur. The unconditional goal is martyrdom, that is, sanctification through death. In order to make all this moving and touching, the circumstances and activities in which the martyr was involved are described. Details of the description of tortures and the death scene are among the most important parts. Until

King Trdat accepted Christianity, Gregory the Illuminator underwent indescribable tortures at the king's hands as a result of his Christian faith, but he did not die.⁴⁷ Instead, to the amazement of all, he became more fortified in his spirit and faith. The main point is the following: the hero's faith is as invincible, and heavenly recompense is as great, as the torture and pain are profound. Because of this, when it is ordered to cut out Hripsime's tongue, she happily opened her mouth; and, when they tightened one of Vahan Goghtnatsi's feet in stocks in prison, he asked for the other to be tightened as well.⁴⁸ Prayer, supplication, penitence, and mortification play a big role in martyrologies and *vitae* so that the spiritually purified hero can become worthy of the gift of heaven. The martyr is alone in his struggle and is surrounded by evil. Good and evil here are opposed in a duel at the end of which good, due to perfection of the victim, finally triumphs.

The masses are always present in martyrologies. They accompany the victim towards the place of execution and are heartstricken by what is done. In a later period, the death scene in martyrologies is changed to a miracle or a vision. Often the face of the martyr, after death, brightens and shines, causing amazement and terror among the people and executioners. This model of perfection of the hero and his martyrdom does not have individualized aspects and content. Rather, it is related to Christianity, for which the essential is the general, the existence confined in God. The similarity of content and style which characterizes those works with eulogistic, oratorical elements, and conventionality of characters arises from this. These hagiological pages are full of miracles and visions whose origins hail from ancient centuries. The power, charisma, and greatness of God affected the reader through the strength of miracles and visions, and it was through these means that the Almighty's will was communicated to men. This circumstance made the description of the miracle or vision important. And so that the moment and message became effective, the author of the *vita* described it with an individualistic discerning approach and objective manner. Often very definite, he described the time, place, and conditions of the miracle, providing names and various details. In this respect, the miracles proffer material about folk life, behavior, customs, and the era, so they have historical and ethnographical significance. Various episodes of life and history, religious customs, conditions of life, or separate small bits of the mentality of the period also become

material for descriptions, but they do not attain essential positions and remain in the shadows.

A work of hagiography customarily begins with a short foreword in which the author notes his unworthiness for writing such a work. The fundamental part, in which the saint's noble origin, parents, birthplace, piety, and exceptional qualities are discussed, follows. The saint's whole life, works, and acts are concentrated towards realization of his primary goal—to become worthy of eternal salvation, through prayer, fasts, penitence, and many other difficult means.

Vitae and martyrologies usually have a eulogistic conclusion. Nonetheless, the principles of hagiography are not immutable. They can change according to beliefs and views of the author. If in Byzantium after the establishment of Christianity the genre of martyrology waned in importance and its place was taken by hagiography, in Armenia martyrology lasted until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries because the Armenian, battling the Muslim world, was always forced to struggle and be martyred for the preservation of his person and faith. From this point of view it is necessary to note that the genre of Armenian hagiography and martyrology has one unique characteristic in which it differs from similar literature of other nations. This is the individual's struggle for his faith and homeland. Often the two are fused and the Armenian appears as much a resolute Christian as a self-sacrificing fighter.

The figure of Mesrop Mashtots bears such a significance. His self-denying dedication to Christianity and the Armenian people not only turned him into a venerated hagiographical hero but a commemorated and glorified native son of Armenia who through his creativity established the foundations for an entire literature. Some other such individuals are fourth-century Catholicos Nerses I Metz, "the Great" (also called Partev, ca. A.D. 329-373), who not only was the main shepherd of the Armenian church (from 353) but also was a renowned political personage; fifth-century Catholicos Sahak Partev (from 387), a pioneer of Christianity and Armenian literature;⁴⁹ and fifth-century general Vardan Mamikonian, together with his companion in arms Atom; and others who were sacrificed on the battlefield of Avarair in the name of their religion and fatherland. The names of Hamazasp and Sahak, participants in the rebellion against Arabs in A.D.

774, are also sanctified in Armenian history as are many others like them.

Judging from the perspective of integrity, works of the first period of martyrology, the martyrologies of Gregory the Illuminator, Hripsime, Shushanik, Thadeus, Sandukht, and others can be considered the best samples of the genre. Here the martyrological heroes are quite alive; the scenes described are affecting and original, and they do not have the characteristic stamp of uniformity and repetitiveness of works of the same mold of later centuries. The admixture of historical and fictional forms and a certain individuation of figures impart a literary flavor to these writings. Their tragic and moving inner psyche has immortalized some of the heroes in the pages of Armenian hagiological literature. For example, the episodes in Agatangeghos's book on Hripsime's appearance with a group of virgins in the fields, impressions about her beauty, Trdat's feelings, the uproar among the people, Hripsime in the royal palace, her victory over Trdat and her departure—all give the work a quick and keen pace, and vividness, especially since this is effected with Agatangeghos's picturesque language and style.

Shushanik's martyrology is a domestic tragedy in which her husband Vazgen's cruelty towards his pious wife is related. Vazgen had become an apostate, turning Zoroastrian, which led to the clash between the Christian Shushanik and himself. Shushanik was the daughter of Vardan Mamikonian. For her it was sacrilege to leave the faith of her forefathers for the mores of Zoroastrianism—polygamy and fire worship. Her Christian and patriotic feelings were against this. She preferred to be martyred rather than live with her apostate and harsh husband, "because she lived with God and died for his name and did not leave the traditions of her fathers, illuminators to Armenians."⁵⁰ Shushanik's Day, which in the Armenian Church calendar is listed among the few national holidays, is celebrated in churches on December 25 with a reading of the *vita Shushanik dster Vardana* (Shushanik Daughter of Vardan), according to *Haismavurk* (Synarxion). Shushanik's *vita* was also translated from Armenian to Georgian.⁵¹

In succeeding centuries hagiography underwent a noticeable decline. It departed from conventions of fifth-century hagiography, becoming more objective, historical, and documentary. The section which has reached us from seventh-century *Hovhan Mairagometsu patmutiun* (Story of Hovhan Mairagometsi) and the biography, written

in the eighth century of the famous Armenian scholar, translator, and philosopher Stepanos Siunetsi, are such *vitae*. Although the original text of the latter work has been lost, one version of it is preserved in Armenian historian Movses Kaghankatvatsi's *History*.⁵²

Mashtots Yeghivardetsu varke (Life of Mashtots Yeghivardetsi), written in the tenth century by Stepanos about the ninth-century Armenian Catholicos, belongs to a separate category of hagiographical literature. It is called hagiography-memoir because, before proceeding to the *vita*, the author gives information about the period, locale, and writer of the work. Stepanos also speaks of Dvin's earthquake and then passes on to the exposition of his real subject.

Unlike hagiography, the number of martyrologies is more plentiful in religious literature of the sixth to tenth centuries. These works, in comparison to martyrologies of the previous period, are fairly standard in form. Counsel and moral lessons take up much space, while the martyrdom of the martyr is conducted in the same fashion as those of Gospel figures. The martyrologies of Yezidbuzid,⁵³ Davit Dvnetsi,⁵⁴ and Hamazasp and Sahak⁵⁵ follow this pattern. Vahan Goghtnatsi's martyrology, written during the period of Arab rule (A.D. 744) by abbot Artavazd, is considered to be one of the works of belles lettres of this era. In the beginning of the martyrology, the author describes, with moving images, the grave events such as the savage holocaust of Armenian *nakharars* in the churches of Nakhijevan and Khram, which took place during the period Arabs were in Armenia. Afterwards, pictures of Vahan Goghtnatsi's life and sacrifice are drawn.

The Armenian captive Vahan, who was the son of Prince Khosrov of Goghtn district, was taken as a child to Arabia and converted to Islam. He even became court archivist. Later, finding out that he was Armenian, he returned to Armenia and to the faith of his forebears—Christianity. Persecuted, he was soon forced to begin his lengthy wanderings. In the places where he lived and traveled, men, with their backwardness, their fear and their misery, were unveiled to him. This narration, told in a simple folk style, is compelling due to the psychologically realistic plot of Vahan Goghtnatsi's experiences and clashes.

During the sixth to tenth centuries translations continued to be penned in addition to original Armenian works. Gagik, abbot of Atom

Monastery, translated into Armenian at the end of the ninth century the martyrologies of Syrian crown princes Nerseh and Ananun and the *vita* of Maruta Nprkerttsi, while Hovhannes bzhishk (physician) during the same century made translations from Byzantine hagiological literature.

The Christianization of the Armenian people brought about examination of ecclesiastical questions and topics, otherwise known as *doctrinal* literature. This was basically created in the fifth and sixth centuries when Greece stubbornly pursued a policy of turning Armenians into Chalcedonians. Later, when the Muslim threat was added to this, Armenian spiritual leaders attempted at all costs to defend foundations of the Armenian Church and established its religious or doctrinal principles. It is noteworthy that this literature had, aside from religious interests, political and national goals. The Armenian clergy tried in every way to preserve its national and religious autonomy against its greatest enemies of that time, Byzantium and Persia, as well as the Arabs later.

Doctrinal literature, declaring the Armenian Church to be "monophysite," attempted in every way to preserve this Church's independence from the Greek Church. Timothy Aelurus's *Refutation of the Council of Chalcedon*, which was translated into Armenian during the turbulent years of the Chalcedonian debates (A.D. 480-484) and had a great effect on Armenian church literature, played a part in this. Its influence can be explained not only by the author's logical persuasiveness but also by its distinct doctrinal style and language. The translation was written in an extreme Hellenized Armenian, with a special dialectical style and phrasing that later became a model for the analysis of such topics.⁵⁶

The collections *Girk tghtots* (Book of Epistles) and *Knik havato* (Seal of Faith), compiled during the Catholicosate of Komitas I Aghtsetsi (615-628) in the seventh century, contain many homilies which lay down the bases of the creed of the Armenian Church. They evince supple logic and rhetorical ability in questions of explication and debate on Christian theses. These collections include the writings and correspondence of fifty Armenian and non-Armenian authors (such as Gregory the Illuminator, Mesrop Mashtots, Yeznik Koghbatsi, Movses Khorenatsi, Hovhannes Mandakuni, and Hovhan Mairagometsi), testimony assembled concerning various theological and credal matters,

and celebrated writings of the Church Fathers. They are useful for understanding the religious thought of the times.⁵⁷

Apocryphal (non-canonical) writings have a special place in the prose of the fifth to sixth centuries. The apocrypha are books excluded from the holy scriptures called canonical. The subject of these writings are themes found in the Old and New Testaments, mainly ancient Hebrew tales which were created in pre-Christian or early Christian centuries. With some of their ideas they contradict theses of the Holy Bible and have thus been left out of the canon. Different churches have had different attitudes towards the books called canonical. However, despite all this, the books included in the Bible are considered authentic. The apocryphal tales, traditions, prophecies, and visions have remained outside the biblical canon. Although these two categories of literature—canonical and non-canonical—existed side by side during early Christian centuries, the Christian Church later took a stricter, disclamatory stance towards apocryphal literature. The names and titles of rejected authors and books were compiled in special lists called the Index.⁵⁸

The apocryphal topics are divided into two categories—themes from the Old and New Testaments.⁵⁹ Of course, apocryphal writings are not only ancient Hebrew stories. Apocrypha on biblical subjects continued to be created in later centuries, too, as mixtures of folk motifs and canonical themes of the Holy Bible. These are writings of folk origin, where biblical topics are flavored with folk stories and customs, which found great acceptance among the masses. Often these writings were authored by sectarians to fight against the official church views. Some of these works underwent a literary reworking in the Middle Ages, including the story of the prophet Moses and the love stories of Joseph the Beautiful and Asanet (Asaneth). Among the reworked apocryphal stories of the Holy Bible enjoying wide popularity in the Middle Ages are the apocryphal stories of *Araratzots girk* (Book of Creatures), including the tales of expulsion from paradise of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and so forth. *The Will of Adam*, *Chirn orhnutian* (The Bunch of Grapes of Blessing), *Pipian*, *Gortosak*, *Kirakosak*, *Ghosimov*, *The Vision of Peter*, *The Story of the Mother of God*, *The Gospel of Youth*, *The Vision of the Illuminator*, and other Syrian *vitae* called non-authentic were translated into Armenian.

Ancient Armenian historians were the first to write down Armenian apocryphal stories. One such tale was the biblical story of Noah's ark and his sons reported by Khorenatsi. According to the historian, Armenians performed it to the accompaniment of *pandirs*, ancient three-stringed instruments.⁶⁰ We also encounter variants of these stories in the *History of the Armenians* ascribed to Pavstos Buzand (Book III, chapter 10), connected with the name of Bishop Jacob of Nisibis. The acceptance of old Hebrew legends as pagan and fictional works, of course, derives from the fact that apocryphal tales were considerably widespread stories in the past. Many of these tales were given a local Armenian content and were adapted to the geography and national conceptions of Armenians. Here is part of one of the Armenian apocryphal tales about Noah: "While Noah, having received the blessing of God, descended from the mountain and settled in Akori, when his children multiplied, they descended [to Ijevan] and lived there three hundred years. And the two sons Andun and Manetun and the other sons grew and multiplied and filled first Ijevan (literally, "abode") and then the world. . . . And the name of the place was called Nakhijevan ("first abode"), and this is the tomb of Noah."⁶¹

There are also Armenian folk variants of apocryphal tales in the works of Yeghishe and Agatangeghos.⁶² Separate stories were composed about the events and great and small figures of the Testaments, becoming more popular than religious literature. The *Gospel of Youth* (or *Childhood*)—attributed to James, brother of Christ, and dedicated to the childhood and adolescence of Christ—is one such story. In Armenian society the *Book of Creatures*, tales of Adam and Eve and those of Abel and Cain (*The Book of Adam*, *The Death of Adam*), are well known among uncanonical writings of the Old Testament. Tales have similarly been woven around themes and episodes of the New Testament, among which are the apocrypha told about Joachim and Anna, the set of stories about Christ's childhood, the apocryphal *Story of Asanet*, and others. There is a specific setting and human relationships in these stories. Though they are not Armenian but are translated works, nonetheless they are narratives derived from the mentality of the Middle Ages which express, parallel to similar works of other Christian nations, the Armenians' human and religious sentiments.

5. Armenian Historiography in the Fifth Century: Beginning and Zenith of the Classical Period

The fifth century is known as the Golden Age of Armenian literature. It was in this century that Armenian writers began to produce historical and literary works of great value as well as translations of works by ancient authors and philosophers. Also, it was during this period that spiritual songs and religious-hagiographical literature were written for the first time in the Armenian language.

This was an era which produced a major upheaval in Armenia by bringing to the fore and resolving issues, which would not only decide matters pertaining to the fifth century but also would be of great import in the future. These issues had matured during the course of centuries, and the need to resolve them had become an acute awareness. Invention of the alphabet, which provided the possibility of writing in Armenian, proved to be the magical key which opened the gates of the Armenian mind. It provided an internal momentum to the national potentialities accumulated over the centuries, to demonstrate the unique qualities of the Armenian people; to reveal their intellectual attitudes, their indigenous habits, and objectives. Classical Armenian literature originated during this very period and reached such heights that, with its literary and cultural principles, it continues for centuries to serve as a model to subsequent Armenian men of letters. Historiography emerged as one of the fundamental genres of early Armenian literature and remained so for many years, spanning well into the eighteenth century. As such, historical works of the Golden Age are of great value as source materials. These provide insight not only into historical and social movements of the Armenian people but also of those peoples,

neighboring or otherwise, with whom Armenians came into political and cultural contact.

All of these classical texts were written by clerics who had intimate knowledge of Greek, Syrian, Hebrew, and Iranian sources. Knowledge of subject matter alone was not, however, sufficient for the creation of such works. It was indispensable that the historian be deeply aware of the environment he was a product of and intended to write about. From this point of view, the state of affairs was rather complex during the years of the collapse of the Arshakuni dynasty. On the whole, the fifth century and those preceding it were not only rich with historical events but also a period of bifurcation between Persian and Hellenistic cultures, and between pagan and Christian traditions. No doubt, this dichotomous religio-cultural antagonism complicated daily existence, as well as human and spiritual relations. It was under such conditions that Armenian authors were writing history, interpreting events, and further embellishing them with their own concepts and opinions.

The adoption of Christianity was incapable of obliterating at once the pre-Christian Armenian legacy. Thus, early Armenian historical writings offer a vivid image of early Christian as well as of pagan cultures. They present figures as well as events drawn from ancient Armenian history in their entire historical, folkloric, mythological, pagan, and Christian range. This scope has left a significant mark upon succeeding generations in their quest to understand the Armenian psyche and culture.

These historical works do not deal exclusively with individual royal houses or personages. Rather, they present memorable historical events and time periods contemporaneous with the historian. Both in scope and range, these works possess the comprehensiveness characteristic of historical writings and, consequently, they are considered Armenian history. Besides comprehensiveness, this literary-historical legacy is also characterized by political, ecclesiastical, religious, and cultural events. Historiography fuses fragments of national folklore, tales, and legends created during the pagan period, endowing them with literary qualities. Furthermore, besides being historical works, these have literary-artistic merit as well.

Perhaps because literary genres were too few and still ill-defined, Armenian writers presented events and incidents in such a way as to hold their readers' literary interest. Thus, they utilized lively and

picturesque language and spiced their prose with elements of folktale and folklore. These works relate not only contemporaneous political events but also report on national traditions and dwell on stories about illustrious individuals, examine religious and ecclesiastical issues and present hagiographies. In a word, these writings can be considered as an encyclopedia where past historical events and deeds are recorded. In these pages, the historical is fused with the literary; fragments of ancient folktales coexist with Christian writings, and a wealth of ethnographical information fuses with both authentic stories and tales coming from the distant past.

On the other hand, the influence of folklore on historiography casts a thick veil upon past events to the point that genuine and authentic events become blurred and acquire a legendary and fictional nature. Therefore, from a philological point of view, the works of Armenian historiographers are considered to be literary rather than purely historic. As such, classical historical writing presents itself as one of the various manifestations of Armenian prose. Having been produced primarily for general reading purposes rather than as scholarly texts, these works inevitably have ideological and didactical tendencies: to teach history to future generations through emotion-filled, picturesque and literary discourse, to arouse national self-consciousness, and to present these lessons of history to Armenians in attempts at self-preservation.

The mark of religion upon Armenian historiography is evident. This literature utilizes extensive scriptural subjects with both direct and indirect references. Similarly, one detects copious theological discourse, hagiography, and orations.

In the fifth century, the most illustrious representatives of historical prose were Koriun, Agatangeghos, Pavstos Buzand, Movses Khorenatsi, Yeghishe, and Ghazar Parpetsi.

Koriun

Koriun, renowned for his *Vark Mashtotsi* (Life of Mashtots), is considered to be the first author in Armenian literature. His date of birth and death are not known (approximately A.D. 380-450). What is clear is that he studied at Vagharshapat, was one of Mashtots' first students, and was active in the movement known as *Targmanchats* (Translators). On

completing his schooling, Koriun departed to Syria and then to Byzantium in order to study languages and to perfect his skills as a translator. After 431, he returned to Armenia, embraced church work, became a cleric, and was involved in literature and translation. Koriun is a contemporary of as well as a participant in the activities of Mashtots and Sahak and is one of the translators of the Bible. His only extant work, the biography of Mashtots, represents the history and evaluation of Mesrop's invention.

Life of Mashtots, which was commissioned by Catholicos Hovsep I Vayotsdzoretsi, is an important historiographical monument about the circumstances under which the Armenian alphabet was invented, and about its author. It has not been established as to when Koriun completed his work, even though it has been estimated that it should have been finished in the 440s, prior to the war of *Vardanants*.¹

Life of Mashtots, as evidenced by its title, deals with the biography of Mashtots and is the very first original work written using the newly invented Armenian script. It is at the same time the first example of Armenian hagiology possessing valuable historical merit. The work is composed of four parts: preface, introduction, body or text, and conclusion. Mesrop Mashtots is depicted as an illustrious figure whose role in the creation of the Armenian alphabet makes him the central hagiographical figure. In Koriun's estimation, Mashtots is fully deserving of a place among the beatific figures of Christian literature as a recompense for his missionary efforts. For this reason, Koriun attempts to give himself the moral prerogative to write about Mashtots and quotes the Bible in order to establish the right of immortalizing his hero's virtuous life. This was certainly the first challenge issued to the Syrian clergy and to restrictive literary conventions. It was intended to spell out the tradition of panegyrics within the genre of hagiology.

In the person of Mashtots, Koriun paints and discusses the character and goals of this strong-willed clergyman endowed with endless energy who unflinchingly went from village to village to teach, to practice Christian charity and express patriotic love, and to show great determination and endurance. Mesrop Mashtots emerges thus as the first literary character in Armenian literature, while Koriun's work is the first Armenian literary work. Koriun's depiction of Mashtots perhaps lacks multifaceted characterization. However, as an ideological hero whom

the author presents as a model of perfection to future generations, Mashtots is endowed with individuality and historicity.

Koriun's is an eyewitness account describing actual events, the real man and his endeavors. Mashtots comes to life and is seen among his friends, students, and patrons; he is also seen leading a hard life full of exertion and lofty pursuits. Koriun's volume is the primary and only source which conveys to us the serious preoccupations of the time. These were the creation of a national alphabet, eventually a native literature, and the dissemination and teaching of Christianity as an enlightened and enlightening faith. Paralleling the activities of Mashtots, note is made here not only of Armenian but also of Greek, Syrian, Georgian, and Caucasian Albanian royal and ecclesiastical figures who assisted Mashtots and who participated in his seminal work contributing to the creation of the Georgian and Albanian scripts.

Life of Mashtots is a laudatory volume. Koriun's intent was to present and extol the inventor of the Armenian alphabet with due respect to his importance, without dwelling upon other aspects of his life and chronological events. Koriun's style is not particularly expressive. Numerous citations from the Holy Scriptures slow down the flow and continuity of composition. This, in part, is the root of his obscure and redundant writing style. On the whole, however, Koriun's composition is comprehensible and his language is quite rich and picturesque. He possesses a brisk narrative style which, at times, provides even moving descriptions. For example:

Even the Great Moses was not so joyful on descending from Mount Sinai. We do not say that he was more [joyous, but in fact] he was much less [joyous]. That is because the man who had beheld God, had received from Him His commandments and [carrying it] in his arms was descending the mountain.²

Or:

... And he, offering his skill, counseled and exhorted them, and, afterward, they all took upon themselves to accomplish his wishes. And he located one Jagha, a translator of the Georgian language, an educated and pious man; thereafter the Georgian monarch ordered to round up children from various corners of

his crowded provinces and turn them over to the custody of the teacher. [And] he took them, put them in the furnace of learning, and with spiritual affection and enthusiasm, scraped [them] free of the stench and defilement of their demons, their frivolous idols which they worshipped, and so alienated [them] from their native [traditions], so forgetful were they rendered, that they even would say, "I am unable to recall my people and my father's home."³

As to why Koriun is not consistent in dealing with chronology and there is a lack of dates in his work, that phenomenon arises out of the hagiographical nature of the work, since in similar efforts emphasis was placed more on activities of the ideological hero rather than on biographical details. Moreover, Armenian historians in the first half of the fifth century do not exhibit consistency in chronological matters. For this reason, instead of exact dates, Koriun often utilizes expressions such as "many a day" and "after that day," "at that time," "after some time," and other such phrases. Nevertheless, it is thanks to Koriun that we know the year in which both Sahak Partev and Mesrop Mashtots died.

Despite its hagiological quality, *Life of Mashtots* is a historical work. It is an accurate documentary source for fifth-century Armenian history. From this point of view, it is not accidental that Koriun's little tome has been used quite frequently by Armenian writers and historians in subsequent centuries. It also has been translated into numerous languages.

Agatangeghos

The next work, which bears the title *Agatangegha Hayots patmutiun* (History of the Armenians, by Agatangeghos), presents events of the Christianization of Armenia in the third and fourth centuries, linked with King Trdat (Tiridates) and Gregory the Illuminator. Its author is unknown. In the introduction, it is merely mentioned that its author is one Agatangeghos from Rome who used to serve in the court of the Arshakuni King Trdat III of Armenia, that it is at the King's order that he wrote the history of the Armenians' conversion to Christianity, and that his is an eyewitness account. Philology, however, has

demonstrated that it is a work written in Armenian during the second half of the fifth century and that it is not a translation from Greek as thought by some scholars.⁴ According to Armenological sources, the author has made use of a biography of Gregory the Illuminator entitled *The Book of Saint Grigoris* which existed in the fourth century, the Syrian martyrology of Gorias and Shmona, Koriun's *Life of Mashtots*, the Bible, miscellaneous hagiographical and martyrological sources, as well as folkloric materials (the fictional episodes "Artavan and Artashir," "Trdat and Hripsime," and "Trdat and Grigor," the novel about the Illuminator, etc.).⁵

The work of Agatangeghos has been translated into various languages. As early as the sixth century it was translated into Greek and much later, into Georgian (eleventh century), Latin (twelfth century), Arabic, and Ethiopian. Translated variants of Agatangeghos's history occur in the medieval literatures of Latin, Italian, French, Slavic, and other nationalities. Up until the present, nine variant editions—in as many languages—have come to light. The evidence indicates existence of an original and primary version, certain passages of which are absent from the current Armenian version but which appear in the Arabic and Greek translations. Movses Khorenatsi notes the stories of Artavan and Artashir as well as that of the maiden Nune, which are missing in the Armenian extant version but existed in the oldest.⁶ In the Armenian Agatangeghos the section about Gregory the Illuminator's wife, Hughita, has been omitted, while in the Greek version it constitutes an important segment.⁷ The critical Greek edition of Agatangeghos by Guy Lafontaine in 1973 solves some of the problems related to the translation of this work. Lafontaine establishes that the Georgian, Slavic, as well as Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopian editions trace their source to the Greek version of Agatangeghos's *History*.⁸

The *History of the Armenians* has special historical significance. It is probably the only complete account of a singularly noteworthy event in the annals of Armenian history: the conversion to and establishment of Christianity as the state religion of Armenia. On the other hand, this work is a reliable source pertaining to pagan Armenian culture: its monuments and places of worship, folk beliefs and superstitions, and organization of the satrapy and economy. In general, it is a glimpse at the domestic living conditions of fourth-century Armenia.

This is also a work based upon historical and literary principles. It possesses fictional, legendary, religious, and national colorations, reflecting fifth-century mentality and taste as well as lifestyles and world view. The ideological objective of the work is the consolidation and glorification of Christianity. Thus, the author rebels against paganism and attempts to lessen the meaning and value of pagan philosophy as well as pagan gods and goddesses such as Anahit, Aramazd, Vahagn, and Astghik.

The study consists of an introduction (wherein Agatangeghos presents himself and notes his motives in writing the history) and three additional sections. The first is entitled *The Life and History of Saint Gregory*, the second, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, and the third, *The Redemption of the Land of Armenia by the Hand of the Holy Martyr*.

King Artashir of Sassanid Persia, who had been attempting to overthrow the Arshakuni dynasty in Armenia, has the Armenian King Khosrov assassinated in A.D. 287 by the Parthian mercenary Anak. As an act of vengeance, the Armenian *nakharars* murder Anak and his entire family. Only a young infant named Gregory survives. He is rescued and taken to Caesarea where he lives and grows up. As a consequence, the Sassanid Artashir attacks Armenia, razes the country, and puts Khosrov's progeny to the sword. The sole survivor is the child Trdat whose nursemaid flees with him to Byzantium where he grows up and comes to be noted for his physical strength and bravery. Later, with the help of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, Trdat reestablishes the Kingdom of Armenia. In the meantime, Gregory, who had converted to Christianity in Caesarea, returns to Armenia and enters the service of Trdat without revealing his past. Soon, it comes to light that Gregory is a Christian. The pagan Trdat subjects him to unendurable tortures and casts him into a "deep pit" (*Khor Virap*) after discovering that Gregory is the son of Anak, the slayer of his father.

About this time, a group of maidens from Rome, among them the beautiful Hripsime, who had refused Diocletian's proposal of marriage, escape to Armenia and find refuge in the wheat fields of Vagharshapat. Emperor Diocletian orders Trdat to locate and extradite the fugitive maidens to Rome. The Armenian King instead is struck by Hripsime's beauty and attempts to keep her. However, the tall, powerfully built Trdat, who had excelled in the Greek Olympian games with his heroic strength, "He who in all things enjoyed renown, now

succumbed to the charm of a girl and suffered defeat by the will and spirit of Christ" writes Agatangeghos.⁹

When Trdat's attempts to hold sway over Hripsime are in vain, he orders the death of the maidens by the most atrocious means: stoning. Terrified by his own evil deed, Trdat becomes possessed by an evil spirit and, according to tradition, is transformed into a "boar" roaming the reedy grounds. Trdat's sister, Khosrovidukht, has a dream in which she is told that the only person capable of saving her brother is Gregory, the very young man who had been cast away into a pit. Gregory, after spending thirteen years in the pit, is set free. He heals Trdat by introducing the latter to the teachings of Christ.

The second part of the volume, entitled *The Teachings of Saint Gregory*, has a strictly religious content and is disconnected from the remaining parts. This part of the *History*, which is valuable from the standpoint of clarification of the relationship between Agatangeghos's writings and patristic literature, is absent in the Greek, Arabic, and certain Armenian variants.¹⁰

The final part, *The Redemption of the Land of Armenia ...*, presents the vision of Gregory, destruction of pagan temples, establishment of Christianity as the state religion, construction of shrines dedicated to the memory of Hripsime and other martyrs, and the mass conversion to Christianity.

The entire book, which is composed of numerous, independent histories mixed with traditional tales, exhibits fundamentally a fictional composition and is replete with legendary and theological elements. The interconnection between phenomena and events is not scrutinized. Everything is explained in terms of divine will and providence. Ancestral pagan temples destroyed by the strength of the cross are looked upon as dens of iniquity and obscurantism. The pagan, passionate nature of Trdat is pacified and healed by the strength of faith in Christ. The sacrifice of the maidens was dictated by divine will leading them to immortality. The substance of the text, culled as it is from a variety of sources, lacks coherence and, overall, is not well integrated. Thus, the work shows to a degree signs of being a compilation. Nevertheless, the simple, interesting, inspirational argumentation, which overall possesses a single aim, has literary merit and confers upon the text a special, romantic charm. This is why Agatangeghos's book is so well-liked and sought after.

The work's historical content as well as the literary quality of its text are skillfully fused to render impressive and memorable the events leading to the emergence and impact of Christian ideology upon the reader. Indeed, this purpose is attained thanks to the artistic characterization of its heroes: Gregory, Trdat, Hripsime, and the rest who, at the same time, are real personalities.

The Armenian King Trdat is presented with traits proper to folkloric heroes: he is worldly and fond of life; he is a brave soldier, outwardly impressive, who exhibits at once animalistic wrath and intense human love for the beautiful Hripsime. Agatangeghos describes him as an intrepid, courageous hero,

... [W]ho in his pride devastated the dikes of rivers and in his arrogance dried up the currents of seas. For truly he was haughty in dress and endowed with great strength and vigor. He had solid bones and an enormous body. He was incredibly brave and warlike, tall and broad of stature. He spent his whole life in war and gained triumphs in combat. He acquired a great renown for bravery and extended throughout the entire world the glorious splendor of his victories. He threw his enemies into disarray and revenged his ancestors.¹¹

Trdat is a composite figure who represents at once Trdat I, II, and III. He is sketched as a hero who, having lived in Greece, had come to be a staunch supporter of the Greek emperor. He fights for the latter by defeating the king of the Goths in a duel. Also, in a fight with a fierce bull, he renders the beast harmless by pulling out its deadly horns and knocking it down. Trdat clearly exhibits traits which have characterized such national mythic and epic heroes such as Haik, forefather of Armenians, and later, David of Sasun, the well-known Armenian epic hero. Virtues and frailties such as heroism, strength, love as well as defeat show Trdat to be fully human, with psychological strengths and weaknesses, in his entire individuality.

The Armenian king is a figure whose adventurous life has fictional and literary qualities which give to Agatangeghos's work a unique appeal. The pagan king with his violent and explosive temper comes across as a livelier and more powerful character than the featureless Trdat who embraces the Christian faith. This transformation

of the king's character has led some critics to the conclusion that the ballad "Trdat and Gregory" celebrates paganism rather than the history of the establishment of Christianity in Armenia.¹² It is possible that in pagan Armenia, long before the establishment of the Christian faith, legends may have existed about Trdat. These may have been linked, at the end of the third century, with Gregory the Illuminator. The Christian Trdat, in contrast to the pagan, is devoid of heroic traits. The patchwork of Christian invention such as the tale of the king's transformation into a boar and his subsequent miraculous healing, clearly alter his epic nature by replacing it with the religious activist dreamed of by the Church Fathers.

Gregory the Illuminator's character is similar to the protagonists of martyrological works of the period by its martyrological resolution in Agatangeghos's work, which is the description of tortures endured by the hero, and by its hagiographic ending, that is, by the depiction of a major event in history. Saint Gregory's figure develops in a one-dimensional fashion: he is endowed with great moral strength and influence whose role in the Christianization of Armenia, according to the author, is considerable. Agatangeghos views Gregory the Illuminator as a powerful, vigorous individual whose God and philosophy he greatly admires. This is clearly felt in all those miraculous stories which the author tells about Gregory and whom he presents as an exceptional individual. In general, Agatangeghos attributes a greater role to the Illuminator in the historical conversion of Armenians to Christianity than he does to Trdat. The story of Hripsime and the maidens also belongs to the hagiological genre. It is similar to the ancient biography of Gregory the Illuminator which had an independent existence and only later did it become fused with the *History* of Agatangeghos. Hripsime and Gayiane (Hripsime's nursemaid) are similarly hagiological heroines who with their limitless ideological self-sacrifice are transformed into literary types and strong individuals, a phenomenon characteristic of church literature and ideology. The *History of the Armenians* by Agatangeghos has an obvious romantic texture, where in picturesque language and style, specific episodes of Armenian folk epics, Christian legends and tales are made use of. These were polished and eventually melded into the body of the text. Manuk Abeghian writes:

With its dialogue, its rich and lively style, its successively interconnected stories and legends, tales of miracles, and its purposeful vision, despite the redundancies and unending prayers and doctrinal pronouncements, this ... much cherished and perused work has well served that purpose set for it by its original and later editors.¹³

Agatangeghos follows the art of Greek rhetorics. He not only writes a history with ideological objectives but also attempts to narrate the subject matter in a pleasing manner and to impress by his use of language. A unique characteristic of his style is also a predilection for choosing authentic events and descriptions. Agatangeghos is deeply convinced of the moral superiority and truthfulness of his subject matter. The individual psychology that shapes his Christian faith is unfettered. This allows him to utilize creative and imaginative literary devices and at the same time remain faithful to reality, without adopting artificial stylistic techniques. He is a firm believer in the value of Christian teaching and is persuaded that the rebirth of spiritual life in Armenia will renew, revitalize, and strengthen the mutual relationship and understanding of the citizenry. This inner vision, which sought the rebirth and sanctification of the Armenian nation, Agatangeghos fused with the story of political events in Armenia. The result has been the creation of a realistic and fictional work of art which has left an indelible mark upon Armenian literature and historiography. This work, together with its variants and translated versions, is well known throughout the world.

Pavstos Buzand

Pavstos Buzand, about whom little information has reached us, is unique among fifth-century Armenian historians. His only known work is entitled *History of the Armenians*, which is the second historical account of Armenian history, according to Ghazar Parpetsi. It is composed of six "registers" (*dprutiunk*), of which the first two are missing.

As has been the case with other Armenian historians, a number of questions have been raised concerning Pavstos Buzand and his

History. These include issues regarding his nationality, his working language, the number of "registers," the completeness of his work, and other philological questions.¹⁴

It is supposed that Pavstos Buzand's *History of the Armenians* is the continuation of Agatangeghos's work. The *History*'s third section, which is evidently the first, encompasses the reigns of Khosrov Kotak (331-338) and his son Tiran. The fourth and most extensive section describes events of the reign of Tiran's son, Arshak II, while the fifth book recounts events of the reigns of Pap and Varazdat. The sixth book is the most concise and summarizes the division of Armenia between Byzantium and Persia (A.D. 384-387) during Arshak III's rule.

Buzand thus summarizes the reigns of the Arshakuni kings and the activity of the catholicoi which span more than fifty years (A.D. 330-387). He describes fourth-century Armenia, including the relations and conflicts of the secular and clerical authorities, within the context of the church and conservative pagan society. The aristocracy, with its religious piety, patriotism, lifestyle, and traditions, is also discussed.

Buzand is evidently the first Armenian historian who wrote such a thorough history of an entire era. He supplements the necessary evidence by citing oral tales and traditions. He regards them as reliable sources of information, without differentiating between the legendary and the real. For that reason, he includes pagan legends, traditional tales, songs, miraculous visions, sermons, and prayers in the pages of his *History*. Buzand also utilized Armenian manuscripts from, for example, Koriun, Agatangeghos, St. Thadeus the Apostle's martyrology, and the Bible, in writing his work. Written sources, however, do not play the same role in his *History* as do traditional tales with their popular and Christian origins. Because of this wealth of folkloric subjects, *History of the Armenians* has become a famous monument in ancient Armenian literary prose.

On the other hand, since Pavstos included numerous popular stories and legends in his work, neither historians of his time (Ghazar Parpetsi, Movses Khorenatsi) nor their successors (Manuk Abeghian, Stepan Malkhasiants) regard his as a serious historical work. Nevertheless, whereas Pavstos's approach from the perspective of reliable evidence is subject to criticism, his literary talent and artistic approach are indisputable. Buzand wields the legendary and semi-legendary contents, with their details, according to his predilections.

And, because of his imagination, he exaggerates and strays from the topic, endowing literary value to the depicted characters. Thus, in passing from the real to the legendary, Buzand demonstrates a thorough perception and deep understanding of political and religious realities of the time. His writing style, however, frequently oscillates from simple to complex, imaginary to real, and cohesive to confused.

Buzand's *History* does not have a clearly defined chronology, the one element that would have formed the basis of a historical study. Further, it is replete with inaccuracies. Be that as it may, his work contains a vast amount of information about fourth century Armeno-Roman, Armeno-Persian, and Roman-Persian relations. The structure of the work is rather unified, the literary value being more prevalent than historical principle. Owing to this enchanting quality, the study is comprised of actual and fantastic tales, where fourth-century Armenian reality with its pagan and Christian aspects and customs is reflected. These two themes coexist in an interesting relationship. Pavstos is hostile toward pagan art, and is distressed that the people are still adhering to these old beliefs and customs. A similar antagonism is characteristic of other fifth-century Armenian historians as well. Secular art—song, music, tales, and traditions—was firmly embedded in popular mores. These were not acceptable to many Armenian intellectuals because the pagan psychology, with its lasting customs, was considered barbaric. Still, Buzand has transcribed both pagan legends (Trdat's valorous feats, the romantic tales woven around the Arshakunis and the Mamikonians) and Christian fables (Gregory the Illuminator's miracles and wondrous *vitae* of the Christians). Buzand employs ancient legends even though he negates the pagan and, thus, brings life to his history.¹⁵

Almost all of the principal figures of fourth-century Armenia—Khosrov Kotak, Tiran, Catholicos Nerses the Great, King Arshak II, his son King Pap, Queen Parandzem (Pap's mother), Generals Vache, Vasak and Mushegh Mamikonian, and numerous other heroes, their personalities, environments and interrelations—come to the fore in this romantic work. Buzand fastidiously studies the public and private lives of all the Arshakuni kings, the activity of the catholicoi, and military leaders. The *History* has a broad scope from this perspective. The author dwells on the lives of the feudal classes and in each class finds an example of his ideal figure personified. Here, the ecclesiastic class, not the aristocracy, reigns supreme.

Armenian statehood was thwarted and the country was divided into two sections during the period in which Buzand wrote his *History of the Armenians*. Throughout those years, the strengthening of Christianity and the activity of dedicated nationalistic religious leaders were given a primary role in efforts to secure internal unity.¹⁶ Hence the author's sympathies go more toward Catholicos Nerses the Great and Catholicoi Husik, Vrtanes, and Khad than towards Kings Arshak, Pap, Varazdat, or even the dynasty of Mamikonian generals. Once again, this affirms the idea that internal spiritual accord, the Christian faith, was a prime guarantor of the country's unity, thus increasing the authority of the clergy. Buzand analyzes historical lessons of the preceding century and concludes by advocating establishment of a unified kingdom under clerical rule.

The archetypal clergyman for the historian is Catholicos Nerses the Great (the activist cleric-statesman) who, with his intelligent reforms and generally religious-national activity, enjoyed wide popularity. A significant section of the *History* is devoted to him:

He was a large man of tall and pleasing stature, with an agreeable appearance, so that no one equal to his beauty could be found on the face of the earth. He was attractive, admirable, and awe-inspiring to all beholders, and enviable for his prowess in military exercises. He was fearful of the Lord God and a strict keeper of his Commandments, benevolent, holy, prudent, most wise and impartial, just in his judgments, humble, gently modest, a lover of the poor, observant of the sanctity of marriage, and perfect in the love of God. And toward his companions he [held] to the Commandment to love every companion like oneself, so that in military life he was thus perfect in virtuous deeds. From his youth, he walked according to the Commandments of the Lord: [according to] justice, integrity, and every service to his companions. He was tireless and zealous toward God, and burned with the Holy Spirit. Thus, in all ways he was perfect in all things. And he loved the poor and miserable, and cared for them so much that he shared his garments and food with them. He was the helper and overseer of the oppressed and the anguished, and he became the defender of the dispossessed.¹⁷

In the work, Nerses is not only a historic figure but also an ideological type. He is presented with the distinct qualities of an hagiological persona, which make him the ideal ecclesiastic. For that reason, Buzand takes tales and episodes from the lives of Basil of Caesarea, Patriarch Jacob of Nisibis, and Shaghida and tries to attribute them to his hero, thus characterizing his intrinsic noble aspects and his deep faith. The historian presents the Catholicos as the beneficent missionary who rebuilds churches, opens schools and homes for the aged, aids the needy and ill, inspires clergymen to be affable and dedicated. He also implements a series of reforms: proscribes wailing for the deceased and following the pagan custom of committing crimes on the grave. Buzand exhibits an impressive artistic twist describing the rituals of Catholicos Nerses the Great's appointment and later, ordination:

And as he stood, still in military dress, adorned in a handsome ceremonial robe with fitting ornaments, with his desirable beauty, tall stature, and splendid hair, standing at the head of the royal couch in the service of the king [and] holding the king's sword with a gold scabbard on a girdle enriched with pearls and jewels [as was his office], the entire assembly unanimously raised a shout and called out: "Let Nerses be our pastor!" [But] when he heard the clamor he refused, thinking himself unworthy, and would not accept.... Then King Arshak, in the ferocity of his heart and great wrath, pulled over to himself the royal sword with its belt (that Nerses bore in his service to the king according to his duties as *senekapet* [chamberlain]), tearing it away from him. And he ordered him bound in his own presence. He ordered the crowning glory of his admirable curly hair, the like of which could not be found anywhere, cut off and his becoming official robe stripped off. Then [the king] gave an order and ecclesiastical vestments were brought and put on [Nerses], and he ordered the elderly Bishop Pavstos called in to ordain him as deacon. Now when [Nerses's] hair was shaved off, many wept when they heard and saw, regretting that beauty [destroyed] through his altered appearance. But, when they saw him adorned with the beauty of Christ, many rejoiced that he

had been called to be the keeper of Christ's house through bountiful grace.¹⁸

A host of religious figures are leavened with dedication to the Armenian Kingdom and the Armenian Church: This includes Husik, Vrtanes, Khad, and others, all depicted with a deep national awareness through their interrelations and conflicts with the country's rulers, the Arshakuni kings. The Armenian kings, Khosrov, Arshak, and even Pap are venerated and praised for their efforts to strengthen the Armenian state and nationalistic activities. Buzand characterizes Pap as a negative figure but also strongly criticizes his treacherous assassination by the Greeks. The description of Pap's assassination in a deceptive setting, around the dinner table, coupled with Buzand's interjections and judgments, and his reprimand of the Armenian *nakharars* who silenced the attempt to avenge the Armenian king transforms this into one of the artistically most impressive episodes of the history.

The tragic life and romantic persona of Arshak II, principal hero of the royal Arshakuni House, are the outcome of the policy of strengthening Armenian statehood. Buzand dedicates an entire series of popular tales and legends to Arshak. He depicts him as a brave individual and wise king, who was able to establish a mighty and centralized Armenian kingdom. As such, Arshak II is portrayed not only with deeply human features, a strong will but also with weaknesses. To demonstrate Arshak's forcefulness and sovereignty, Buzand recalls the story of construction of the city of Arshakavan. With the intent of subordinating the Church and the *nakharars* who refused to submit to centralized authority, Arshak II built a city and named it after himself. There, he settled the dispossessed, disaffected, and lower classes from different parts of the country. When the enraged Armenian *nakharars* and the Persian king, Shapuh (Shahpur), ravage Arshakavan, Arshak massacres the descendants of the rebellious *nakharars* and exhibits the attributes of a potent and independent statesman. The spiritual link between Arshak II and the fatherland is expressed in a thoroughly romantic fashion. Persia's King Shapuh summons the Armenian monarch to Tizbon as if for negotiations; yet, in reality, he tests Arshak's loyalty and intentions. (This is reminiscent of the Greek myth of Antaeus, and the force of love exercised by the native land.)

Then, King Shapuh ordered half of the floor of his tent covered with the soil brought from Armenia and water poured over it, and half of it left with the same soil from his own land. And he had Arshak king of Armenia brought in before him, and ordered the other men to leave, and taking him by the hand, he walked all about. And while they were walking back and forth in the tent, [Shapuh] said to him as they walked on Persian soil: "Arshak, king of Armenia, why have you been my enemy? For I loved you as a son and wished to give you my daughter for a wife and make you a son. But you hardened against me and of your own volition became my enemy against my will... ." King Arshak answered: "I have sinned and am guilty before you ... and worthy of death!" But King Shapuh, taking him by the hand, moved about feigning innocence, and brought him to the side where the Armenian soil had been piled on the floor. As soon as he reached that spot and stepped on Armenian soil, [Arshak] most haughtily and insolently changed tone. He began to speak, and said: "Away from me, malignant servant, lording it over your lords! I shall not spare you or your children from the vengeance [due] to my ancestors."... Then again [Shapuh] took him by the hand and again led him to the Persian soil, and [Arshak] bewailed what he had said, abased himself, and fell at his feet in deep repentance of the words he had spoken. But whenever he led him by the hand [back] to Armenian soil, he spoke even more harshly than before.¹⁹

Arshak II is also portrayed in a complex psychological state at Shapuh's Anhush (literally, "without memory") fortress, where he puts an end to his life in very tragic circumstances.

The Armenian king's trusted eunuch, Drastamat, receives permission to have a visitation with Arshak II, long imprisoned in the dungeon of Persia's Anhush fortress. Drastamat removes his chains, bathes his dear king, dresses him in magnificent clothes, and, at a splendid feast, delights him with a band of musicians. After years of captivity, misery and degradation which had brought Arshak II to a dull indifference, his eyes are suddenly opened, his heart astir with lost flutters and sense of dignity. But realizing that the change in his condition is temporary, he picks up the knife given to him to cut fruit,

and thrusts it into his heart. The horrified Drastamat, witnessing the King's tragic demise, kills himself with the same knife.

In Buzand's work, Arshak II's life is replete with romantic episodes, beginning with the first years of his reign, the account of his marriage to Parandzem and, finally, his tragic end. This persona has become a source of artistic inspiration and is reflected in modern Armenian literature (Raffi's *Samuel* and Stepan Zorian's *Hayots berde* [The Armenian Fortress]) as well as in operatic composition (Tigran Chukhajian's opera *Arshak II*).

Among the many Armenian *nakharar* families, Buzand favors the Mamikonians. Mamikonian commanders, with their self-sacrificing dedication, are brave and noble in their struggle. They served the Armenian Church and Arshakuni kings loyally. Commander Manuel Mamikonian considers it degrading for a soldier to die in bed. He says:

From childhood I was nurtured in battle, and I valiantly accepted every wound. Why has it not been my lot to die in battle, rather than have a death fit for a beast? For it were good for me to have died in battle for my realm ... for our wives, for our children, for the people serving God, for brothers, companions, and faithful friends. But although I bore myself most gallantly, it is my lot to die a vile death in my bed!²⁰

Among Mamikonian commanders, Arshak II's inseparable ally, Vasak, is a singularly brave figure. The Commander who had demonstrated his valor and historic spirit in numerous battles, emerges as a combative individual, always holding high his national dignity. Finding himself at the palace of King Shapuh, the enemy, and realizing the latter's schemes, as well as the threat to his and Arshak II's lives, Vasak is not intimidated at all by the deceitful Shapuh when the latter mockingly asks: "You have been a destructive fox who caused us so much trouble; were you the one who slaughtered so many of our braves? What will you do now? For I will kill you with a fox's death." Vasak answers with dignity: "Seeing now my small stature, you call me fox; you do not grasp the measure of my greatness, for until now I was a lion for you, and now [I have become] a fox. But while I was Vasak, I was a lion. One of my feet rested on one mountain and my other foot on another mountain. And whenever I leaned on the right foot, I drove the

mountain on the right to the ground; whenever I leaned on the left foot, I drove the mountain on the left to the ground."

"Come, let me know what are those mountains that you leveled with your feet," Shapuh asks angrily. And Vasak replies: "Of those two mountains you were one and one was the king of the Greeks. As long as God granted it to me, I felled you to the ground and likewise the king of Greeks. As long as the blessing of our father Nerses rested upon us and God did not abandon us. As long as we obeyed his words and his counsel reached us, we knew how to teach you a lesson, until we now fall with open eyes into the pit. So now do what you will."²¹

In response to those words, Shapuh orders Vasak to be skinned, stuffed with grass, taken to the Anhush fortress, and propped up in Arshak II's cell.

Vasak's son, Mushegh Mamikonian with his valor and ideal personality, is one of the outstanding characters in Buzand's *History*, a subject for literary treatment. After taking decisive measures against the Persian military prisoners, Mushegh generously returns Shapuh's harem and allows the Albanian King Urnair to escape during the battle of Dzirav, explaining to the angry Armenian King Pap that he cannot raise his sword against those wearing a crown.

This historical and literary concern also infuses other figures and events. They are of a romantic nature and have a noticeably strong folkloric influence. From this viewpoint, among Armenian historians, perhaps Buzand has most closely followed folkloric tales of the epic novel entitled *The Persian War*. With his descriptive skill, diction, and style, and dynamic dialogues and method of writing in general, he brings to life heroic legends of the prolonged Persian wars. With such qualities, his historic characters have acquired various traits of literary figures, endowing the entire narrative with artistic value. In contrast to those inspired by patriotism and a strong sense of national unity, are the traitors to the nation—Meruzhan Artzruni and Vahan Mamikonian—whose atrocious and condemnable behavior are painted with dark colors. Buzand has not only succeeded in imparting individuality to each of his characters but also he has incorporated valuable subject matter, factual occurrences, human relations, aristocratic-ecclesiastical relations, and lifestyles—details reflecting reality, which in many ways illuminate those pages of the past, long since obscured, with historic, ethnographic, and literary perspectives. It is significant that many subsequent

Armenian writers have been inspired by the descriptive imagery and romanticism of Buzand's history: Nerses Shnorhali, twelfth century; Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, fourteenth century; Hovasap Sebastatsi, sixteenth century; Raffi, nineteenth century (*Samuel*); Stepan Zorian, twentieth century (*Hayots berde*, *Pap Tagavor* [Pap the King]) and others, developing various narratives, with different literary genres, while attempting to delineate the political and national sentiments of the fourth century.

Ghazar Parpetsi

Ghazar Parpetsi, about whose life and work a substantial amount of precise information has been preserved, is another representative of historiographers of the Golden Age.

He was born sometime during the years 441-443 in the Parpi village of the Aragatzotn province, and hence is called Parpetsi. He received his primary education in the Georgian Bdeskhk Ashusha's house, after which he departed to Byzantium (ca. 465-470) to continue his studies. Upon returning to his native land, he resided with the Kamsarakan princes and, after spending two years in seclusion in Siunik, was appointed abbot to the Vagharshapat (Ejmiatzin) Cathedral, by the country's *marzban* (governor), Vahan Mamikonian. Shortly thereafter, he was indicted and, unable to withstand the persecution of the backwards clergy, he left Ejmiatzin for the Mesopotamian city of Amid (ca. A.D. 490). There, he wrote his famous appeal to Vahan Mamikonian, *Epistle to Vahan Mamikonian*, whereby he criticized the reactionary clergy, its ignorance, and ethics.²²

From the perspective of the time, this work is an important literary and evidential document, in which the embittered Ghazar, with eloquently versed style and wit, refutes each accusation that was directed toward him; and, with agility in language and logic, proves his innocence. The author's objections and abundant evidence attest to and confirm the existing struggle between the Hellenophile and Persophile elements at the beginning of the fifth century, which continued until the end of the century and even longer.

Vahan Mamikonian, convinced of Ghazar's innocence after having read the *Epistle*, summoned him back to Armenia and commissioned him to write the history of the Armenians.

Ghazar Parpetsi's work, which is written in the latter part of the fifth century and is the continuation of Pavstos Buzand's *History*, incorporates events of the century in which the author lived.²³ The works of Armenian historians Koriun and Agatangeghos (whose names are mentioned in the preface), as well as the Bible and oral creations, served as Parpetsi's sources.²⁴ Ghazar Parpetsi, with his scientific principles, is nothing like his predecessor, Pavstos Buzand.

Unlike Buzand, whose work was romantic and saturated with events, Parpetsi is rigorous and restrained in examining and assessing events. Imagination has no role in his work. As a serious historian, Parpetsi rejects the style of Buzand's *History*, his negligent approach and numerous deviations regarding events. In his preface, Parpetsi writes: "... You need the appropriate arrangement of words, as methodical science requires it; to write assuredly and with reverence, so that learned men, upon understanding, do not criticize; to not invent new things with superfluous talk; to not minimize incidents by recounting them with careless abridgments; rather, you need to make everything known with judicious care."²⁵

The work comprises a preface and three episodes. The *History* opens in the first episode, with the division of the Armenian Kingdom (A.D. 387), until the deaths of Mesrop Mashtots and Catholicos Sahak (A.D. 440), including the creation of the Armenian alphabet and, later, the fall of the Arshakuni Kingdom.

The entire second episode is the history of the Vardanants Rebellion (A.D. 451) in which praise and promotion of the Mamikonian lineage is presented with consistent tendentiousness and is also continued in the *History*'s following episode.

The third episode considers Armeno-Persian relations after A.D. 451, and the activity of the Armenian liberation movement and victory against Persia, led by Vahan Mamikonian. With its scientific-historical value, this last episode is most noteworthy. In it the thirty to thirty-five year history is summarized, and the historian is more original, having witnessed and participated in the events of the described passages.

Thirty years after the Vardanants Rebellion, a second major rebellion against Persia erupts in Armenia (A.D. 481-484), spearheaded

by Vahan Mamikonian, nephew of the leader at the Battle of Avarair, Vardan Mamikonian. The Armenian *marzban* Vasak had sent Vahan and his brother, the sons of Hmayiak (who had fallen victim to war in A.D. 451), to the Sassanid court as hostages at a young age. The Georgian Bdeskhk Ashusha, however, bribing the Persian chiefs, receives permission from the Persian king, Yazkert, to take Hmayiak's children to Armenia. Becoming a brave and virtuous youth, Vahan tries to free the country by throwing off the Persian yoke and prepares for rebellion. Despite having only a few troops, he succeeds in delivering many heavy blows to the enemy and forces the latter to resign from its previous dominion, offering his conditions to Persia: "You want to kill our soul," says Vahan to the Persian king Vagharsh, "neither we nor our forefathers were able to endure that danger and torment, and we picked up our weapons." And so, the historian presents Vahan Mamikonian in this scene, as a bigger-than-life character, a national hero, who turns his brave goals into reality with unrelenting struggle.

Vahan is similar to the popular heroes and is a more literary figure than historic character, whose strong nature is depicted in battle scenes and in orations. Hrant Tamrazian writes:

Parpetsi ... transports the reader from village to village, site to site, he takes him through homes, huts, grass heaps; he describes both famous and humble people, laborers and noblemen, Armenians, Georgians, Persians; he gives many details which bring the picture of a century and an era to life. This struggle is in no way similar to previous ones; here there is an eminently unending, unrelenting, continuous combat, a long road where the fighting Armenians appear forceful at times, and sometimes in small numbers, with only a few soldiers. It is more accurately like a dim, weakly lit fire. And yet, it is the Armenian's journey, in whose long course, the land of Armenia at the end of the fifth century, appears with expressive and natural accents. This gentle prose, with its inner-weavings and details, wealth of customs, natural accents of daily life gives a genuine picture of the new period of Armenian government.²⁶

As a historian, Ghazar Parpetsi is singular not only for his sense of scientific responsibility but also for his political, moral, and religious

puritanism. He has a prudent approach toward the period's political life, religion, and the Church. Like other writers of the fifth century, Parpetsi strictly upholds the Christian religion and lauds it in the second and third episodes of his work. His relation toward events and characters is explicit: he endows heroes dedicated to the fatherland—including the Mamikonians and Kamsarakans, Catholicos Giut, Hovhannes Mandakuni, among others—with the most majestic and beautiful characteristics; and the apostate traitors—including the Persian commander Mihrnerseh, Vasak, Varazvaghan, Gadisho, and others—with negative and unflattering traits.

Ghazar Parpetsi's *History of the Armenians* is an invaluable literary creation. The series of events and legends is presented with a lively style and is dedicated to one principal idea: the goal of praising and preserving Christianity. The historical characters which are put on the scene as affirmation to those notions, recite orations, express opinions and make remarks, which not only distinguish themselves but also reveal preoccupations of the time. And the eloquent speeches, which are delivered with spirit and inspiration, reflect activities and events and give the work a rhetorical imprint.²⁷ In spite of this, Parpetsi's arrangement is neither artificial nor obscure. His style is alive, the characterizations brisk, and replete with observations. This is especially so when he tries to individualize the historic characters in details. Yet those figures and feats are neither unusual nor heroic. In human concepts, they are ordinary and natural with their emotions. And, this serene and realistic narrative depicts the fifth century with its most significant events and interpretations, which frequently differ from those of Yeghishe and Khorenatsi. For example, in contrast to Yeghishe, Parpetsi does not condemn Vasak with hatred for his treacherous acts in the Battle of Vardanants; rather, he examines more delicately Vasak's psychological trepidations. Or, regarding the role of the Mamikonians, he is opposed to Khorenatsi, who had no sympathy for that *nakharar* family. Parpetsi's style is at times lively and conversational, at times vulgar or sharp, and at times, obscure. But generally, his style is polished, often rich in literary appeal, expressed through colorful descriptions in the excerpts describing the nature of the land and the people's lifestyles. Such is Parpetsi's picture of the Airarat province:

The vast fields are full of animals, surrounded by picturesque and green mountains abundant with hooved and masticating animals, together with many other wild beasts. From their highest peaks flow lavish waters, irrigating the fields, inexhaustibly providing bread and wine, aromatic and sweet vegetables, and various oil seeds to the countless male and female population flocked at the king's city. If a person viewing it for the first time turns his eyes toward the slopes and plains, he will think them garments, and not colors of flowers, spread out pleasantly.²⁸

Among classical Armenian writers of the fifth century, Ghazar Parpetsi stands out for his talent as a rhetorician and his abilities as a historian conveying us to the turbulent events at the turn of the century.

Yeghishe

The fifth century is unique in the history of the Armenian people not only because of the creation of the alphabet and unprecedented development in culture but also because of the reversals as well as great moral victories in the nation's struggle for survival. It was in this century that the fateful war of Armenian existence, the Battle of Avarair (A.D. 451) was waged—the Armenian rebellion against the Persian King Yazkert II, where the population rose to defend its country and its faith against Persian domination. Fifth-century historian Yeghishe discusses this in his work, *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*.

Unfortunately, very little is known about Yeghishe's life.²⁹ According to tradition, he was born ca. A.D. 410-415. He was among the younger students of Sahak Partev and Mesrop Mashtots. In his youth, he traveled to Alexandria with a group of students, including Movses Khorenatsi, Davit, and Mambre to study at the school of Cyril of Alexandria. He returned to Armenia around 441 or 442 and entered service under Commander Vardan Mamikonian; later he became Vardan's secretary. Yeghishe took part in the rebellion of 450-451, after which he left secular life to enter the priesthood. For the purpose of writing his famous *History* commissioned by Davit Mamikonian the Elder, and other religious-hermeneutic works, Yeghishe retreated to the

mountains of Mokk first and later of Rshtunik, in a hermit's cloister. Yeghishe is thought to have died some time during the years 470-475 and was buried at St. Astvatzatzin Monastery, also known as Yeghishe's Monastery, located at the shore of Lake Van.

In addition to the opus about the Vardanants war, Yeghishe authored doctrinal works, and interpreted certain books of the Bible, among which the most valuable is *Araratzotz meknutiun* (Interpretation of Creation), concerning the book of Genesis. *History of Vardan and the Armenian War* relates the circumstances and events leading to the famous Vardanants Rebellion. Yeghishe's contemporary, Ghazar Parpetsi, has also written about the Battle of Vardanants in the second part of his *History of the Armenians*. Historians from later periods, such as Sebeos, Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi, Tovma Artzruni, Mesrop Vayotsdzoretsi, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, and others have essentially reiterated Yeghishe and Parpetsi's versions of the Battle of Vardanants. The evidence presented by the two authors about the Battle of Vardanants is almost identical, while their analyses of circumstances leading to the rebellion differ.

The most important issues in philology have been whether Yeghishe was a contemporary of the events he describes, the relationship between Yeghishe and Parpetsi, who preceded whom, and which of the two has given a more plausible analysis of political events of the times.

A few researchers, including Babgen Kiuleserian, Nerses Akinian, Nikoghayos Adonts, and Robert W. Thomson, have concluded that Yeghishe was a sixth- or seventh-century writer, and that he was not contemporary with the reported events.³⁰ Similar disagreements have also been raised about the relations of Yeghishe and Parpetsi. Some scholars contend that Parpetsi had preceded Yeghishe, and that the latter used Parpetsi's *History* as a source. Akinian finds that "Yeghishe's *History* is based upon Ghazar [Parpetsi]'s model...." According to Akinian, Yeghishe's *History* describes the Armenian Rebellion of 572; subsequently, these events are ascribed, in an "unlearned" way, to the Vardanants Rebellion of 451.

The studies conducted by Yervand Ter-Minasian, Manuk Abeghian, Valeri Bryusov, and Derenik Demirchian, confirm that Yeghishe, who was a witness to the rebellion of 451, was the first historian to report the Vardanants Rebellion—notwithstanding the fact

that he has been edited several times by copyists and subjected to modifications and additions.³¹ The critique assumes that Yeghishe's work must have been written during the years 460 and 480. As regards the nature of this work, some scholars, including Anton Garagashian, Grigor Khalatiants, Abraham Zaminian, and Akinian, have praised it as a literary creation or heroic romance. However, the second part of Ghazar Parpetsi's history is thought to be a more reliable historical document. According to the aforementioned critics, the objectivity of the historian has been clouded by his passion and emotion which, in turn, have distorted accuracy and the portrayal of events. For that reason, Yeghishe is not considered to have a scientific-historical value to be a valid source for the events of Vardanants. By contrast, Abeghian defends Yeghishe; he regards the latter as possessing a deeper and broader world view than Parpetsi.³²

Yeghishe's work comprises seven chapters. In the concluding chapter, entitled "Again Concerning the Same War and the Torture of the Holy Priests," he tells of the martyrdom of the Ghevondian priests; and in the two addenda *Vasn khostovanoghatsn hayots Khorena yev Abrahamu* (Further Concerning their Disciples the Confessors) and *Anuank nakhararatsn ...* (The Names of Princes Who for the Love of Christ Gave Themselves with Ready Willingness to Imprisonment by the King), he describes the struggles of the students of the martyred "beatifics" and provides a literary depiction of the invincible will of the Armenian women. Explicating the severe conditions and consequences of the political situation in the country, Yeghishe has divided the work into three sections: "Beginning," where he examines the circumstances leading to that major popular uprising, the Vardanants war; "Middle," where he traces the development and course of events, and "End," where he discusses the termination of the rebellion and its aftermath.

The century-old enmity between Armenia and Persia, which was further exacerbated after Armenians embraced Christianity, tilted the country's orientation towards the Christian Roman Empire. Suspicious of this alliance, Zoroastrian Persia attempted to put an end to Armenia's semi-autonomous status. To accomplish this, the Persians sought to convert Armenia by force of arms to Zoroastrianism. Such an attempt, if successful, would have meant destruction of Armenia's national identity. The conflict between the two countries was, however, political rather

than religious. Armenia's adoption of Christianity thus became the pretext that Persia used to attempt realizing its plans.

Armenians rejected the decree of the Persian crown to abjure Christianity and to adopt Zoroastrianism in its stead. Yazkert II summoned the Armenian leaders to Tizbon, the Persian court. The Armenian *nakharars* departed to Persia in the spring of 449 and appeared before the King. The latter threatened to massacre them and ruthlessly destroy Armenia if they did not comply. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the *nakharars* feigned apostasy to escape imminent danger, in order to return to their land and prepare their people to confront the ensuing tribulation.

So it was done. The Armenian *nakharars*, accompanied by a group of 100 magi, were sent to Armenia with a mission to demolish local churches and erect instead altars for fire worship. Upon arrival in Armenia, however, the *nakharars* and population, joining forces, prepared to wage a decisive struggle in the name of Christianity and the fatherland. Vardan Mamikonian emerged as leader of the rebellion, which was named after him the *Vardanants War*. It began on May 26, 451, on the fields of Avarair, at the bank of the Tghmut River (near Maku, in the northwest corner of present-day Iran). Since the defense of Christianity against Zoroastrianism was viewed as a national concern, the rebellion took a pan-national scope: *nakharars* as well as aristocrats, artisans, and clergy all took up arms.³³

Yazkert deployed an army of 200,000 men and a brigade of battle elephants, outnumbering the Armenian forces almost three to one. Nonetheless, the Armenians led by the motto "Death not understood is death; death understood is immortality," fought relentlessly against a superior enemy and fell heroically in defense of faith and freedom. Yeghishe writes the following about the conclusion of the battle: "For neither side was victorious, and neither side was defeated; but braves fought braves, and both sides went down to defeat."³⁴ After the Battle of Avarair, the Armenian troops, losing their illustrious leader who died in battle, continued the struggle in various parts of the country, inflicting serious losses on the Persian forces. This resistance eventually forced Yazkert II to change his policy; he reinstated the former privileges extended to the Armenian Church and aristocracy.

The Vardanants rebellion has had lasting historic, spiritual, and moral significance in Armenian life. The Armenian people, in its fight

for survival and faith, immortalized the memory of the "fatherland martyrs," Vardan and his soldiers, thus transforming episodes and heroes of the battle into a source for future romantic and poetic inspiration.

In this respect, the significance of Yeghishe's opus in the history of Armenian literary prose is invaluable. Although *History of Vardan and the Armenian War* has neither the broad scope of Pavstos Buzand's *History* nor the historical balance of Ghazar Parpetsi's work, it nevertheless is great in its profundity and perfection of literary structure. While from an ideological perspective, Yeghishe's work condenses and foreshadows the course of the historic fate of the Armenian people—the struggle, even unto martyrdom, which has retained its significance to this day.

Because of its literary qualities, the tome has variously been regarded by some philologists as a legend, a romance, poetry, or hagiography. But Yeghishe, in addition to being a writer, was also an historian. This is attested to by historiographical attributes of the work reflected in the diplomatic machinations of Persian politics, the country's domestic situation, the system of tributes, and the political leanings of the *nakharars*. Yeghishe's religious perspective does not hinder him from taking the right stance on issues of the day. As an historian, he is aware of the domestic political causes of the rebellion. However, issuing from Christian ideology, he gives the Vardanants battle a martyrological interpretation; that is, struggle for the victory of the nation's religion or martyrdom for that cause. This is where the hagiographic imprint of the work emanates from, taking on literary colors and pushing Yeghishe's poetic skills to the level of a historical epic.

For Yeghishe, the honor and defense of the Christian religion is even more important than existence without that faith. By the same token, Christianity is presented as the way to certain salvation. As Robert W. Thomson notes, Yeghishe utilizes two key terms, *ukht* (covenant) and *orenk* (order) which embodies at once religion, nation, country, mores, laws, and traditions. In a word, *orenk* in the eyes of Yeghishe is the supreme expression and essence of what constitutes an Armenian. And it is precisely in order to uphold the *orenk* that Armenians make a covenant among themselves and take up arms against Yazkert. Furthermore, the author equates sacrifice with martyrdom and

so discusses its purpose and meaning. He draws examples from the martyrdom of the Holy Fathers—the apostles and martyrs, men who considered “apostasy ... as death, and death for God’s sake as everlasting life.”³⁵ To explain Christian concepts, Yeghishe, quoting Ghevond Yerets, brings examples from the lives of holy and virtuous Church Fathers, recounts acts done in the name of God by Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others. Good, evil, sin, fault, justice, vengeance, and forgiveness are analyzed from the perspective of past ages; and the “Holy Covenant” of Christian truth, which is the sacred alliance of Church and *nakharars*, is underscored. In so doing, Yeghishe quotes the Bible, which gives special charm and validity to his history: “Where sin abounded, God’s graces abounded much more” (Romans, 5:20) or, “He [Christ] humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Epistle to the Philippians, 2:8), etc.

The strength of the work, which has immortalized the author as well as the heroes of *Vardanants*, resides in the brilliant ideological and literary passages. Furthermore, that impact derives more from the solid literary structure, than from its historic foundation. It is an immortal patriotic monument to self-sacrifice, self-knowledge, and a beacon for future generations. Yeghishe considers his task as “consolation to friends, hope to the trusting, and encouragement to the valiant.”³⁶ The didactic intent, which is also that of Christian literature in general, is omnipresent in Yeghishe’s work. His message to future generations is: to be true to the traditions of the Christian faith, uphold freedom of conscience, and defend liberty. As an accomplished author, Yeghishe has mastered the art of eloquence and possesses a delicate literary sense and taste. He captivates the reader with the sincerity of his inspiration, intense patriotism, and the ability to impress. He does not recount events; rather, he lives through them. Furthermore, he assesses evidence, becomes excited so he criticizes, commends, and condemns.

Like other historians, Yeghishe is direct in his attitude towards his characters. The early classical Armenian authors, because the topics they wrote about were very close to their hearts, were extremely emotional and subjective in their approach. This explains why, whether praising religious or patriotic acts or condemning reprehensible or treacherous behavior, Yeghishe shows deep convictions about the righteousness of his beliefs and emotions and remains sincere to them. For the concept of dedication and sacrifice for Christianity and country,

he is at times a cleric, while at others a historian, utilizing the experience gained from lessons of history. Yeghishe emphasizes the moral strength of Christianity when he writes:

Those whose souls are sluggish in heavenly virtue are great cowards in their physical nature. Such a man is shaken by every wind, troubled by every word, and trembles at every contingency; he is a dreamer in his lifetime, and at his death is dispatched to irretrievable destruction. As someone said of old: "Death not understood is death, death understood is immortality." He who does not know death, fears death; but he who knows death does not fear it ... A blind man is deprived of the rays of the sun, and an ignorant man is deprived of a perfect life. It is better to be blind in the eyes than blind in the mind. As the soul is greater than the body, so is sight of the mind greater than that of the body. If someone is very affluent in worldly wealth but is very poor in his mind, such a man is more pitiable than most others—as indeed we see not only in ordinary men but even among the very greatest. If a king does not have wisdom that is equal to his throne, he is unable to shine in his rank The soul is the life of the whole body, but the mind steers both body and soul. Just as it is for a man, so it is for the whole world. A king has to give account not only for himself, but also for all those for whom he was the cause of destruction.³⁷

While the artistry in Pavstos Buzand's and Movses Khorenatsi's works have sprung largely from folkloric sources, in Yeghishe it rests on the uniqueness of the latter's individual literary makeup and writing style. Manuk Abeghian points out that:

Yeghishe has a sense for beauty ... Aesthetics govern his writing from beginning to end. The action progresses with harmonious division of the parts, with secondary but lively natural details, with ornamental and blossoming style, with picturesque images and solemnity.... On the whole, his work is very appealing and pleasant, frequently rapturous. The reason for this is that everything springs from sincere and deep emotion; one does not detect contrived artistry.³⁸

His life experience and ability to understand men, have given Yeghishe the tools to forge such sharp figures as Commander-in-Chief Vardan Mamikonian, Ghevond Yerets, and their antitheses, the *marzpan* Vasak Siuni, the Persian King Yazkert II, the commander Mihrnerseh, and others. The former become the embodiment of heroism and nationalism; the latter, of treachery and coercion. With his masterly descriptive pen, Yeghishe places protagonists in the course of actual events where their characters reflect their individuality and political stance.

Vardan Mamikonian is the carrier of Yeghishe's nationalistic ideals. As such, the author uses several epithets to describe the Armenian leader, including, "Vardan the Great," "Vardan the Brave," "Virtuous General," "Vehement Vardan," and "Valiant Vardan." Vardan Mamikonian's speech to the Armenian army before the Battle of Avarair attests to his valor as a great general, which is at once a panegyric to fearlessness and military prowess and a brilliant example of ancient oratorical art:

You and I have participated in many battles. Sometimes we have valiantly beaten the enemy, and sometimes they have defeated us. More often, though, we have been the victors than the defeated. ... So I beseech you, my valiant comrades, especially because many of you have surpassed me in valor and are superior in ancestral rank. But as of your own free will you have appointed me your leader and general, may my words seem sweet and agreeable to the ears of both the greatest and the least.

Do not be afraid of the multitude of the heathen; do not turn your backs to the fearsome sword of a mortal man; for if the Lord puts victory in our grasp we shall destroy their power so that the cause of truth may be exalted. And if the time has come to end our lives in this battle with a holy death, let us accept it with joyful hearts, provided only we do not mingle cowardice with valor and bravery.³⁹

The entire content of Vardan's oration expounds Yeghishe's ideas about martyrdom and his conception of victory.

The leader of the rebellion beseeches his allies to fight bravely for national dignity, the Armenian Church and religion; because, through the path of struggle and sacrifice, Christianity would be victorious. This, for Yeghishe, is the ultimate goal. Vardan says:

He who supposed that we put on Christianity like a garment, now [realizes] that as he cannot change the color of his skin, so he will perhaps never be able to accomplish his designs. For the foundations of our [Christianity] are set on the unshakable rock, not on earth but above in heaven...⁴⁰

The scene in which the Ghevondian priests are martyred, the orations of Ghevond Yerets and Catholicos Hovsep, and the martyrology of Khoren and Abraham, paint a touching picture in the struggle for the Christian faith. Yeghishe also vividly portrays the enemy figures, exhibiting a narrative imagination. The progressive unfolding of events casts light upon Yazkert's character with his distinctive traits of a despot, portrayed with unflatteringly severe colors and exaggerated tableaux:

But him Satan made his accomplice, and spewing out all his accumulated venom filled him like a quiver with poisonous arrows. He began to wax haughty in his impiety; by his roaring he blew winds to the four corners of the earth; he made those who believed in Christ to appear as his enemies and opponents; and he tormented and oppressed them by his turbulent conduct.

Since confusion and the shedding of blood were dearer to him, therefore he was agitated within himself: "On whom shall I pour out my poisonous bitterness, and where shall I loose my multitude of arrows?" In his great folly, like a ferocious wild beast, he attacked the land of the Greeks. He struck as far as the city of Nisibis and ruined in his assault many Roman provinces; all the churches he put to the torch, he amassed plunder and captives, and terrified all the troops of the land.⁴¹

Yeghishe's hatred and disdain toward the traitor Vasak is reflected in the depiction of the latter's miserable death, followed by the author's fair but harsh conclusion: "He who sinfully had wished to be

king of Armenia had no known tomb, for he died like a dog and was thrown out as a carrion... . There was no crime he left uncommitted during his lifetime; nor was there any terrible evil which did not befall him on his death."⁴²

Vasak, who over the centuries has become the archetype of the traitor, is anathematized by Yeghishe for his inglorious deeds and death. "These recollections have been written concerning him in order to reprove his sins, so that everyone who hears and knows them may cast curses on him and not lust after his deeds."⁴³

The history of Vardanants is written with descriptive language and is imbued by a heroic ethos, especially exhibited in depictions of battle scenes, such as the Battle of Avarair:

When these preparations had been completed and both sides were filled with passion and inflamed with wrath, they rushed on each other with the force of wild animals. Their melee caused a roar like the thundering in turbulent clouds, and the echoing of their shouts made the caverns of the mountains shake. From the multitude of helmets and shining armor of the soldiers light flashed like rays of the sun. The glittering of the many swords and the waving of the massed lances were like fearful lightning from heaven. For who is able to describe the tremendous commotion of the terrifying sounds or how the clashing of shields and the crack of bowstrings deafened everyone's ears?⁴⁴

Or:

As the battle continued, the day began to go down and night drew on. Many reached the point of death, especially as the bodies had fallen so thickly that they lay in dense piles like logs hewn in the forest.

There one could see so many broken lances and snapped bows that the holy bodies of the blessed ones could not be distinguished, and there was a frightful press of those who had fallen on both sides. The survivors had run off and scattered in the safe valleys of the plateau. Whenever they came across one another, they again fell to mutual slaughter. This bitter work continued without respite until the setting of the sun.

Since it was springtime, the flowering meadows became torrents of many men's blood. Especially when one saw the vast mass of fallen corpses, one's heart would break and one's bowels shrivel up on hearing the groaning of the injured, the crying of the hurt, the rolling and crawling of the wounded, the fleeing of the cowards, the hiding of the deserters, the dismay of the faint-hearted, the wailing of the effeminate, the lamentations of dear ones, the bewailing of relatives, and the woe and grief of friends.⁴⁵

Yeghishe's optimism and strong will are evident in even the most severe and tragic events. Such an authoritative posture communicates a distinct grandeur, and, at the same time, warmth to the story of Vardanants and leaves a powerful impression on the reader. It is singularly moving when he tells of those brave and proud *nakharars* who were summoned to Persia after the war and were thrown into abject oriental dungeons. These men, inhabitants of the mountainous land of Armenia, accustomed to living on the vast plains and snow-covered peaks of their ancestral homeland, not only endured the terror of confinement and isolation but also upheld their valor and preserved their national and human dignity. Yeghishe's praise for the wives of the fallen soldiers and exiled *nakharars* is expressed with tenderness and psychological finesse. The wives, once tender and sensitive beings, become rugged women, worthy of bearing the names of their heroic husbands:

The delicate women of Armenia, who had been cosseted and pampered in their litters and sedan-chairs, regularly attended the houses of prayer without shoes and on foot, begging with tireless entreaties that they might be able to endure their great tribulation. Those who from their childhood had been raised on the marrow of steers and the dainty parts of game, most joyfully ate grass, living like wild animals and not at all mindful of their accustomed luxury. The skin of their bodies turned black in color, for by day they were burned by the sun, and the whole night they lay on the ground... . The ice of many winters melted; spring arrived and the returning swallows came again. Life-loving mortals saw this and rejoiced, but they were never

able to see their desired ones. Spring flowers recalled their faithful husbands; their eyes longed to behold the dear beauty of their faces. Hunting dogs were no more, and the chase of the hunters was silenced. They were recalled only by commemoration, and no yearly festival brought them back from afar. They looked at their places at the table and wept; in every hall they remembered their names. Many statues were set up in their memory, and the names of each one were inscribed thereon.

Although their minds were thus agitated from every side, they did not lose heart or slacken in heavenly virtue. To strangers they appeared as mourning and suffering widows, but in their souls they were adorned and consoled with heavenly love. No more were they accustomed to ask a visitor from afar: "When shall we be able to see our dear ones?" But the desire of their prayers to God was that, as they had begun, so they might be able valiantly to complete [their course] full of heavenly love.

And may we and they together inherit the city of blessings and attain the promises made to those who love God in Christ Jesus our Lord.⁴⁶

Yeghishe's style is at once restrained and expressive. His language, full of emotion, is endowed with poetic agility, fluent and profound solemnity. He has reached a high level of linguistic sophistication by utilizing comparisons, contrasts, direct and indirect discourse, rhetorical questions and devices, epithets, and a descriptive and rich vocabulary. Yeghishe expresses his beliefs with somber and persuasive logic, compelling the reader to heed his words and believe him.

History of Vardan and the Armenian War, which has been hailed as *voskeghnik* ("golden") while its author has been called "The Nightingale of Avarair," is a masterpiece of ancient Classical Armenian prose. For centuries, it has inspired noble patriotic emotions, shaped literary taste, imparted literary energy to Armenian writers, and has left a deep imprint on Armenian culture and literature. Through Yeghishe, the Vardanants' valor has left a deep and enduring imprint on Armenian national and religious life and consciousness as well. The memory of the Battle of Avarair has shaped the world view of countless Armenian

generations. It has become, over the centuries, a constant source of inspiration in many disciplines such as the fine arts, literature, and music. The Vardanants battle theme goes back more than a millennium and a half in Armenian literature, beginning with Yeghishe's *The History of Vardanants* and is treated in Demirchian's novel *Vardanank* in the twentieth century (1943, 1946). The charm of Yeghishe's opus and the historical role it has played is not difficult to understand, considering the exceptional popularity it has enjoyed in the history of medieval and contemporary Armenian culture.

In this sense, the history of the Battle of Vardanants has produced a host of literary works. The twelfth-century poet Nerses Shnorhali has dedicated hymns to the Ghevondian martyrs and the memory of Vardanants, wherein the heroes who fell at the battlefield of Avarair—Khoren Khorkhoruni, Hmayiak Dimaksian, Tachat Gntuni, Vahan Gnuni, Arsen, Garegin Srvandztiants—are praised. Shnorhali's beautiful hymn "Wondrously Hallowed" is sung at public ceremonies, in private homes, and on stage. Nineteenth-century poet Ghevond Alishan has written about the battle of Avarair and its hero in his poem, "Nightingale of Avarair." Nineteenth-century authors such as Gabriel Patkanian, Harutiun Felekian, Hovhannes Hovhannisian, Jivani, Leo, Shahaziz, Rapayel Patkanian, Garegin Srvandztiants, and twentieth-century novelist Derenik Demirchian have written poems and plays immortalizing the Vardanants War. In the Middle Ages, the Battle of Avarair and its hero have also been depicted in Armenian painting, illuminated manuscripts, and architecture.

It is noteworthy that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Vardan Mamikonian has acquired an exclusively patriotic identity, while in his era and in the Middle Ages, he was also venerated as a religious hero and placed among the ranks of saints.

Movses Khorenatsi

The pinnacle of classical Armenian historiography was reached by the most talented author of the Golden Age of literature, Movses Khorenatsi, who has rightfully been named the "father of Armenian historiography" ("*Patmahair*"). According to tradition and certain autobiographical data which Khorenatsi includes in his work, *History of*

the Armenians, Khorenatsi was born in the village of Khoronk (after which he is called Khorenatsi) in the province of Taron and was among the students of Mesrop Mashtots and Sahak Partev. After the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431, when Sahak and Mesrop attempted once again to translate the Bible from Greek to Armenian, they realized the need for specialists in Greek language, culture, and poetic art. Therefore, they sent a group of students, including Khorenatsi, to study at the scientific and philosophical center of the day—Alexandria (Egypt). For this reason, philologists believe that Khorenatsi was born between the years 410-415—assuming that he went abroad during the years 432-435, when he was twenty to twenty-five years of age. Very little is known about his years in Alexandria. It is likely that he mastered foreign languages, including Greek, poetic and oratorical arts, theology, grammar, and philosophy.

Khorenatsi's studies probably lasted nearly five to six years, after which he returned to his homeland with great hopes and aspirations. On the way, the turbulent sea passage brought his friends and him to the shores of Rome, Italy, where they stayed for a short while. After visiting the graves of St. Paul and St. Peter, they traveled to Greece and then, Armenia.

Khorenatsi returned to his homeland to find that his beloved teachers were deceased. It is likely that the students returned after 439, by which time Mesrop and Sahak had already died. They received a cool reception in their own country. Endowed with a wealth of knowledge and imbued with the desire to serve their country, Khorenatsi and the other graduates not only were denied meaningful work but also were subjected to harassment and deprivation.

Khorenatsi's intellect and education were not fully appreciated in Armenia, then under Persian domination, since he was considered to be an Hellenophile. The conservative Armenian clergy with Syrian and Persian sympathies used every means to criticize and reject Greek culture and its interpreters.⁴⁷ This harassment and deprecation of Khorenatsi lasted several years, until after many disappointments his name was saved from oblivion and adorned with the laurels of immortality, to be remembered from century to century as "father of poetry" ("*kertoghahair*"), "philosopher," and "father of history." He was more than sixty years old when Catholicos Giut ordained him a bishop. After his ordination, the clerical attitude toward him changed for the

better, and favorable conditions were created for him to pursue literary and translational activity. The gray-haired Khorenatsi attained a degree of fame during his lifetime, when Prince Sahak Bagratuni commissioned him to write the history of the Armenian people.

Who was that patriotic prince who conceived the idea of writing a history of the Armenian people and suggested this plan to Khorenatsi? Some believe that Sahak Bagratuni was named *marzpan* (governor) of Armenia during the rebellion of the 480s and died in battle against the Persians in A.D. 482. Khorenatsi completed his *History* before Bagratuni's death; and so, it is likely that the work was commissioned and written during the years 470 to 480, when Khorenatsi was between sixty and seventy years old. It is believed that Khorenatsi died in the last decade of the fifth century or the turn of the sixth and, according to tradition, was buried at Taron's Arakelots monastery.

Interested as he was in history and literature, Khorenatsi, despite a difficult life, continuously wrote and translated. A few of his works have reached us, but their authorship has not been definitely established. These are *The History of Hripsime*, *On Vardavar*, *Epistle to Sahak Artzruni*, and *History of the Armenians*. Some hold that Khorenatsi translated *Pitoyits girk* (*Hiusumn pitoyits*) (Book of Useful Things),⁴⁸ and Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Patmutiun varuts Agheksandri* (Alexander Romance) from Greek, as well as some other translations whose authorship has not been ascertained.⁴⁹

* * *

Khorenatsi's masterpiece is *History of the Armenians*, which is not only a lasting monument of Armenian literature but also an internationally acclaimed creation.

History of the Armenians has been the object of much historical, philological, and critical research from the mid-eighteenth century to this date—essentially studying questions of sources and philology without presenting the work in its totality and its historic significance. The research has addressed such issues as: the century in which Khorenatsi lived; the sources he used to write the *History*; and its reliability. These questions have been debated among scholars for more than 200 years. Several Armenian and foreign scholars have participated in these debates, generating a rich bibliography about Khorenatsi's

work.⁵⁰ From this perspective, among all Armenian historians, perhaps Khorenatsi has been the most criticized and the most haphazardly placed in one century or another; not only the period in which he lived but also the reliability of his sources have been questioned.

Until the eighteenth century, Khorenatsi's *History* was regarded with reverence and used as a textbook. After the eighteenth century, particularly during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the history of the Armenian people became the subject of scholarly scrutiny, Khorenatsi's sources and the issues and events of his period were studied more thoroughly, which led scholars to diverse conclusions.

The first anthology of the works of classical Armenian historians was published by the Bishop Tovmas Vanandetsi in Amsterdam in 1695, after which, Khorenatsi's first critic, La Croze, in the mid-eighteenth century, attempted to prove that *History of the Armenians* was written in the ninth or tenth century, during the Bagratuni Armenian Kingdom.⁵¹ Gutschmid, in the 1880s, considered Khorenatsi's book a seventh-century work and questioned the identity of the author.⁵² A later study by Carrière compared Khorenatsi's Greek and Roman sources and concluded the following: since the Armenian translations of Sylvester the Roman's *Life* and Socrates's *Church History*—which the author of *History of the Armenians* used and quoted—were completed at the end of the fifth century and seventh century, respectively, the *History* therefore must have been written not in the fifth, but the eighth century.⁵³

There are scholars, even today, who consider Khorenatsi's work a product of the eighth century or even later period because the historical evidence is not found to be reliable; and in extreme cases, declare it a tendentious "fraud," negating even the most valuable part of Khorenatsi's *History*, the section dealing with folklore (Khalatians).⁵⁴ In the twentieth century there were, in fact, attempts to assimilate Khorenatsi with the eighth-century historian Ghevond Yerets (Zaminian, Akinian, Manandian, and others). The objections and hypotheses were rebutted with scientific-historical evidence and careful examination and comparison of sources, establishing that Khorenatsi was born in the fifth century and proving that the historian was able to make use of those sources in his era as well.⁵⁵ Finally, Abeghian gave an explanation of the use of folkloric sources and elements in Khorenatsi's *History*.⁵⁶

In 1940, Stepan Malkhasiants published a book entitled *Khorenatsu areghdzvadzi shurje* (Regarding the Khorenatsi Enigma) where he rebuts with well-considered and scientific rigor the evidence put forward by Manandian and others. Thus Khorenatsi is placed in the fifth century and his work given the appraisal it merits. On the other hand, stone inscriptions discovered not long ago increasingly attest to the authenticity of Khorenatsi's *History* and compel us to view and evaluate the objectivity of the father of Armenian history from a new perspective. Nevertheless, the problems of evaluating Khorenatsi still stir the interest of numerous researchers and keep *History* continually at the center of the scholarly-philological world's attention.

* * *

Khorenatsi's work is a unique and retrospective trip to the Armenian people's historic past, to the depths of ancient documents and memoirs where the author himself is the careful interpreter of events. In this sense, Khorenatsi's opus is an extensive analysis which spans the prehistoric times of the Armenian people, up to the fall of the Arshakuni Kingdom in 428. Khorenatsi was the first to undertake such a task; as a result, *History of the Armenians* becomes a valuable source for future historiography. This explains the broad interest which many of the world's historians share vis-à-vis Khorenatsi's study and the fact that it has been translated and published in numerous languages.⁵⁷

History of the Armenians comprises three books or parts. The first is entitled "Genealogy of Great Armenians"; the second, "Intermediate Period in the History of Our Ancestors"; and the third, "Conclusion [of the History] of Our Forefathers."

In the first book, Khorenatsi presents the legendary history of mankind and that of Armenians—from Adam and his generation, passing to Noah's genealogy, and the branch of his son Japheth, noting the names of great Armenians. This section is devoted mainly to the Urartian period of Armenian history, up to the conquests of Alexander the Macedonian in the fourth century B.C. Here the fables of Haik, Aram, Ara Geghetsik, Tigran, and Vahagn, of the mythological genesis of Armenians find their place. According to Khorenatsi, the main source for this segment has been Mar Abas Catina's history⁵⁸ and the work *Hiusumn pitoyits*.

The second book, "Intermediate Period in the History of Our Ancestors," begins with the era of Alexander the Macedonian's domination, when the Parthians rebel, free themselves from Macedonian rule, and establish their own rule in Armenia, under the reign of Arshak Partev's brother, Vagharshak. Khorenatsi tells of the Syrian King Abgar and the martyrdom of the first apostles, and of events under the kingdoms of Sanatruk, Yervand, Artashes, Artavazd, Tiran, Tigran, and Vagharshak. The *History's* second book concludes with the kingdom of Trdat III (A.D. 298-330), tracing the establishment of Christianity in Armenia. Khorenatsi's sources are drawn from the writings of Agatangeghos, Labubna, Julius Africanus's *Chronography* (fifth book) and several works in Greek.

The third book, "Conclusion [of the History] of Our Forefathers," summarizes the period from Trdat III's death up to the fall of the Arshakuni dynasty in Armenia (A.D. 428). This period includes more recent historical occurrences, where several written sources are utilized and where the author is a participant and witness to many events. Khorenatsi takes up where Buzand leaves off. Indeed, after Buzand's *History*, in which the succession of historical episodes reaches the division of Armenia in 387, Khorenatsi's third book becomes the richest chronicle of subsequent circumstances, and for that alone, acquires great historiographical significance.

For Khorenatsi, to write such a comprehensive history, numerous sources, literary-historic material and weighty evidence were, of course, necessary. And he, often realizing the magnitude and responsibility of his work, complained to Bagratuni about the inaccessibility of such material.

"Is there not a book near to me," as is said in Job (37:20), or the literature of your homeland by means of which, like the Hebrew historians, I can bring down [my account] without error from the beginning as far as you, or starting from you and others work backward to the beginning? Nonetheless I shall begin, though with an effort, provided that one of our countrymen be found who will be grateful for these labors. And I shall begin where the others did who were in the church and Christians, considering it superfluous to repeat the fables of pagans concerning the beginnings, though I shall mention some of the

later times and the famous men where the divine Scriptures concur until we necessarily reach the pagan narratives; and from these we shall take whatever we consider reliable.⁵⁹

It is noteworthy that Khorenatsi used all available sources which to one degree or another contained information about Armenian history. These included works of Christian and pre-Christian writers, whether Greek, Syrian, Jewish, or Iranian. Khorenatsi notes some of his sources, thus giving the work reliability. His sources include the Bible, Mar Abas Catina's history, pagan stories whose authors, according to Khorenatsi, are the pagan priest Olympius and the Syrian writer Bardaisan, Homer, Herodotus, Plato, the work *Hiusumn pitoyits*, the *Church History* of Eusebius of Caesarea, Labubna of Edessa, Josephus Flavius, Julius Africanus, Polycrates, Evagoras, Scamadros, Agatangeghos, Ariston of Pella, Porphyry, Khorohbut as well as Greek and Persian mythology. He uses a contemporary historian's approach in choosing his evidence, employing not only the Bible but also pagan sources. It is difficult, however, to infer the reasons why Khorenatsi did not mention certain important names which he used in writing his history. Among them are Koriun, *Vita* of the Apostle Thadeus, Pavstos Buzand, Armenian translations of foreign authors such as Clement of Alexandria, Philo Judaeus, Eusebius's *Chronicle*, Gregory of Nyssa, Socrates's *Church History*, the translation of Sylvester the Roman's *Life*, Diodorus of Siculus, and others.

As a historian, Khorenatsi attempts to remain by all means faithful to factual evidence and the spirit of the times. His critical attitude toward written sources and folkloric material also emerged from this belief. Most important was his desire to preserve historical authenticity. For that reason, he got rid of unpersuasive and fabulous aspects of legendary sources, evaluating objectively the evidence, weighing different sources, and attempting to disclose the inner links and logic of events. From this perspective, the transcription of popular lore is particularly valuable, giving the work a certain allure and making it a celebrated work. Khorenatsi interpreted and explained the allegorical nature of fables, unlocking their hidden meaning, sharing one of the fourth-century B.C. Greek philosopher Euhemerus's opinions that the first gods were humans who, after death, were deified by man. Khorenatsi finds many of folklore's heroes in the Holy Bible as well

(Bel is equated to the Bible's Nimrod) and the entire Greek mythology contains beautiful and rich allegory (the legend of Prometheus). Generally, when it comes to fables, priority is given to the Greeks, as the historian on each occasion expresses his admiration of Greek art, naming Greece "the mother or nurse of sciences." He relies on Greek sources and does not consider Greek pagan gods false. The Persian myths, on the other hand, are criticized, considered "unclean and monstrous," for which he, appealing to Bagratuni, writes: "Surely they are not Greek fables, noble and polished and meaningful, which have hidden in themselves allegorically the meaning of the events? But you ask us to explain the reason for their irrationality and to embellish what is unadorned."⁶⁰ Nevertheless, Khorenatsi is the first who documents the name of a Persian romantic hero, Rostom, as well as the Persian fables of Biurasp Azhdahak—considered one of the oldest records.⁶¹ Regrettably, Khorenatsi's Byzantine bias and Christian faith have prevented him from probing deeper into the annals of Armeno-Iranian literary-cultural influences.

Armenian folkloric and mythological assets from the pagan period form the most extensive portion with literary significance in *History of the Armenians*.⁶² For this reason, a series of folk traditions has been preserved, particularly from the pagan period, which emerges as the first examples of Armenian literary thought. These are the fables and songs about Haik, Ara Geghetsik, Aram, Tork Angegh, Vahagn, and other illustrious Armenians and kings. We find here a reflection of Armenian mythological conceptions which have been preserved even in the Christian era.

Khorenatsi has transmitted to us simple and fragmented folkloric songs the way he heard them from bards, unadulterated. These creations are polished and artfully constructed pieces with vibrant colors and represent a highly symbolic group of mythological heroes. These heroes undertake deeds that are expressed with poetic know-how. The "Songs of Bards," "Ballads," tales, and the stories woven about the rise of the Mamikonian, Kamsarakan, Bagratuni and other historic and traditional satrapic houses are taken from oral sources.

In the legend of Haik, a detailed account is given of Haik, "forefather" ("*nahaper*") of the Armenians and his adversary Bel, incorporating events from prehistoric times such as Haik's "elegant and strong" appearance, descriptions of his dwellings, the negotiations

between Bel and Haik and attempts of the former to reduce the latter to subservience, war preparations, and the battle scene. With Haik's glorious figure, the "Father of Armenian History" legitimizes the origins of the Armenian people. As other nations traced back their genesis to the depths of mythology (Roman, Hellenic), so, too, Khorenatsi traces the millennia-old origins of the Armenian people back to the Biblical mythology of the building of the Tower of Babel.⁶³ In order to legitimize and sanctify the primogenitors of the Armenian people, Khorenatsi traces their genealogy to Japheth, second son of Noah. His goal is "to write the history of our nation accurately ... of the kings and the princely clans and families: who descended from whom, what each one of them did, which of the various tribes are indigenous and native, and which are of foreign origin but naturalized, ... from the time of confusion at the building of the tower up to the present."⁶⁴

Movses Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians* is unique among the examples of fifth-century Armenian historiography such as Koriun's *Life of Mashtots*, Agatangeghos's work, or Pavstos Buzand's and Ghazar Parpetsi's Armenian histories. Khorenatsi does not adopt a didactic or moralistic approach that the other fifth-century historians did. According to Khorenatsi, the purpose of historiography is to familiarize others with ancient history and civilizations, a task which Khorenatsi accomplishes well in the pages of his book. In addition, each of the aforementioned historians reproduces events or deeds from or about a particular period or historical figure, while Khorenatsi writes a comprehensive and critical history encompassing ancient nations—Babylonians, Syrians, Medes, Persians, Romans, and other peoples—and whose antiquity and style of writing inspire not only serious historians but simple readers as well. This was audacity which both his predecessors and successors clearly lacked.⁶⁵

Khorenatsi's approach in evaluating historical evidence is critical in nature. In historiography, he considered the selection of evidence of prime importance, whereby the described events would mirror reality. He regarded the task and responsibility of the historian to be the examination of facts as well as the worthy deeds of illustrious people, while excluding the fictional and concocted. "No history is true without chronology," writes Khorenatsi, and, in an effort to disclose the true, he lays out weighty as well as slight proofs, comparing and verifying, to establish the precise chronological chain of history. This

alone has been the reason why future generations have relied on Khorenatsi's *History* as reflecting reality and have cited and disseminated it.

By the same token, critical and analytical studies have made evident certain deficiencies in the scientific value of his work. These have been found in the chronological data and historical background pertaining to individual kings. It was indeed impossible for Khorenatsi to avoid such factual errors, omissions, and deficiencies since the period in which he wrote was characterized by a serious paucity of source materials. Historiography offers many such instances of confusion. Thus, historical events and figures of different periods are muddled, the Syrian King Abgar is portrayed as an Armenian king or Artashes I is confused with Artashes II. Divergences appear mainly because of the sources upon which Khorenatsi has relied. Nevertheless, *History of the Armenians* represents political realities, interpersonal relations, and events of the time accurately and faithfully.

In this period, when the Armenian kingdom had already fallen, but before its memory had become faint, Khorenatsi uncovered successive bright and dark pages of the Armenian past and sought to awaken Armenian national consciousness, to write an accurate and reliable book for the Armenian youth to "read the history of our fatherland frequently and continuously." To reach his goal, Khorenatsi would write such a work that would not necessarily be a dry compilation of evidence but be read as an interesting book, with poetic spirit which contained insight, characters, and imagery. And, in this sense, Khorenatsi's work is not strictly a historical treatise but a literary creation bursting with emotion. "The fine art in his history," writes Hrant Tamrazian, "is an extremely helpful means which confirms or complements his political and historiographical thought, ethical principle, and record of the actions of characters. Yet, this is exactly where his superb literary merit, his unsurpassed mastery of story-telling, the high level of polishing and integrating scholarly, political, mythological matter, different literary genres and styles (lyrical diversions, epistolary, and descriptions) is evident, which, however, had its primary role: to put everything in its right place and subject everything to the ascendancy of all-powerful reason."⁶⁶ The literary digressions with which Khorenatsi complements his political and historical composition facilitates comprehension of the subject and

enables the reader to see the complete picture of life as it is. It is with such an immediate approach that he discusses his patron, Sahag Bagratuni. This is interesting not only in the historical sense but also for its role in the elucidation of ideas and preferences of the teacher and the student, of the respected intellectual, and the young man. This relationship, as relevant as it is for acquainting the reader with prevalent intellectual and social interests of the time in which Khorenatsi lived, is also interesting from the perspective of defining the characters of Bagratuni and Khorenatsi. Bagratuni is presented as a broad-minded and sophisticated individual, who bore great respect for the elder historian. The former had made certain suggestions to Khorenatsi regarding the composition of his work, though Khorenatsi had not necessarily been bound to them (as for example, with Persian legends). In Bagratuni's posture one detects the student's deep reverence for Khorenatsi, which is at once modest and meritorious. In his turn, Khorenatsi directs words of praise and admiration toward Bagratuni, warmly praising his love for the fatherland, literature, and the arts.

Through your estimable request I have realized the unfailing effusion of divine grace upon you and the constant activity of the Spirit on your understanding, having come to know your soul before your person. Your request is dear to my interests and especially to my profession. Therefore it is not only right to praise you but also to pray on your behalf that such you may ever remain.

For if on account of our reason, as it is said, we are the image of God, and furthermore, if the virtue of a rational being lies in intellection and you have an assiduous desire for these matters, then by keeping alive and aflame the spark of your intellect by such noble discernment, you ornament reason, whereby you remain in the image. Thus you may be said to make reason's archetype rejoice, being moved and stirred to this goal by a noble yet moderated passion.

In which regard this too I see, that if those who before us or even in our own time were the nobles and princes of Armenia neither gave similar commands to those wise men who were under their authority to compose histories, nor thought of bringing in from outside the assistance of wise men—now that

we have realized that you are so disposed it is clear that you must be recognized as superior to all your predecessors and worthy of the greatest praise and deserving of inscription in such a monument as this.

So having received your request with pleasure, I shall labor to bring it to completion in order to leave this as an immortal memorial to you and your descendants to come. For your family is an ancient one, valiant and fertile not only in words and useful counsels but also in great and numerous glorious deeds that we shall record in the course of this history when we shall trace all the genealogies from father to son. Indeed I shall describe briefly but faithfully the origin and formation of all the Armenian noble families as these are found in certain Greek histories.⁶⁷

And who was Khorenatsi the man, the individual in his *History*? The elderly scholar is the embodiment of virtue, sagacity, and patriotism, who evaluates historical events and individuals only from the perspective of social qualities. He does not describe incidents and events or discuss this king or that one but critiques or praises, recommends or rejects, displays or uncovers, guides to the national and patriotic, becoming a spiritual confidant, enthralling the reader with his lively history. And in so doing, he exhibits a personality who not only possesses an endless reserve of knowledge, keen judgment, and a deep awareness of his country's political interests but also a kind soul, sincerity and virtue.

Khorenatsi is highly analytical and displays a well-reasoned approach to his subject-matter. While he has kept himself above and beyond societal developments, he has been able to discern the historical and political angle in human relationships and daily events. For example, the passionate tales woven around Gnel, Tirit, Parandzem, and Arshak, which Pavstos Buzand uses in his work, receive a different interpretation from Khorenatsi. If Gnel's indictment and murder by Tirit and Arshak's stance are incited by Parandzem's beauty, or the concepts of human jealousy and love, then Khorenatsi is inclined to see in these events underlying social determinants. Indeed, it was not Parandzem's beauty but Gnel's wealth which became that touchstone Arshak wanted to control. The superficial, romantic aspects of this and similar events

are of no interest to Khorenatsi. He examines the underlying causes of events; he rejects the fictional or legendary; thus, his interpretations become distinct. Consequently, the author's historical approach and literary sense are not contradictory; rather, they tend to harmonize and complement each other—something which helps the reader to assimilate with ease the history and, concurrently, acquaint himself with the author—because Khorenatsi periodically appears, not only with his astounding rationality but also with his reflections and the bitterness he has endured. Nevertheless, this is so restrained and accomplished with such dignity that the historical subject remains well focused, without undue digressions or willful complications. The author's fleeting judgments and descriptions frequently reach a high level of sophisticated imagery, even assuming the literary dimensions of a prototype such as Trdat III, Arshak II, Nerses the Great, Shapuh, Sahak Partev, and Mesrop Mashtots.

Although Koriun has written an entire book on Mashtots, the figure of the latter would not be as complete had the sections on Mashtots not been in Khorenatsi's work. Khorenatsi warmly tells of Mashtots's divinely inspired work, and he bestows upon him great praise: "He [Mashtots] taught not as if it were an art, but he gave as it were inspiration to his pupils in apostolic fashion... . Pride or flattery were never able to find a place in his way of life; but he was gentle, kind, and benevolent, and he showed everyone that he was adorned with the virtues of the angels. He was angelic in appearance, fertile of mind, glorious of speech, persevering in action, resplendent of body, ineffable in habits, noble of counsel, unswerving in faith, long-suffering in hope, honest in love, tireless in teaching."⁶⁸

Sahak and Mashtots are firm and energetic individuals—soldiers dedicated to the fatherland, who worked with great sprint and diligence; the tenderness and love for whom Khorenatsi directs with ingratiating innocence; and, which future generations share.

Sahak Partev, who was the spiritual father of Armenia and Mesrop Mashtots's contemporary and colleague, was not only an educated and sophisticated catholicos, a patron of the arts and education but also a great politician and patriot. Sahak Partev, during these difficult years in the history of the Armenian people, is described by Khorenatsi as an alert national activist, who participated closely in the dissemination of the alphabet and literature and translational efforts.

When Armenian *nakharars* protest to “Sahak the Great” (as Khorenatsi calls him) about Artashir, last king of Armenia, accusing him of immorality and asking the Catholicos to help remove him from office by slandering him in the presence of the Persian shah, Sahak retorts:

Heaven forbid that I hand over to wolves my erring sheep and not bind up the wounded and sick but cause his ruin. For if it were before a Christian king [that we denounced him] I would be eager and would not hesitate, hoping to raise up the fallen one; but with pagans it would be for his greater destruction, and I refuse in accordance with the saying: “Do not betray to wild beasts the person who confesses himself to you” [Ps. 73:19]. For he has been sealed by baptism, even though he is licentious. He is a fornicator, yet he is a Christian. He is dissolute of body, yet not unbelieving of spirit. He is impure of life, but not a fire worshiper. He is weak with women, but he does not serve the elements. And how could it be that I would exchange my sick sheep for a healthy wild beast whose [very] health is our punishment?⁶⁹

At the Persian palace, they try to persuade Sahak to malign the infamous Armenian king; however, Sahak’s paternal feelings and Christian conscience resist resolutely. The Armenian king is dethroned and the Catholicosate captured. Years later, Armenians demand return of the imprisoned Sahak. The Persian king Vram summons Sahak before him in the chamber, reminding him that he must be an obedient subject to the Persian throne and, threatening Armenia with heavy losses and ruin, warned Sahak to never consider rebellion. Capitalizing on the moment, under life-threatening circumstances, Sahak Partev defends himself with great dignity:

Then Sahak the Great stood up, adopting a modest and grave demeanor as for an oration, and with a diffident expression and an even humbler voice began to speak of his services and their ingratitude. He also reproached them for their deceitful and honeyed words, their cruel plots and evil deeds; he added to this a refutation of the senseless blasphemies they had uttered, in that he [Vram] had spoken of the “erring faith.” He poured scorn on

their religion and finished with a marvelous exposition of the faith according to the ability of the pagan audience [to comprehend it]. He did not throw all the splendor of his discourse before the unbelievers for their derision, like pearls before swine to be trampled [cf. Matt. 7:6], but was so dazzling that the tongues of the magi turned to ashes. The king himself was astonished and confused, and all the multitude of the elegant Persian court stood on tiptoe and pricked up their ears. Finally Vram commanded much money to be given him as an eloquent and stout-hearted man who spoke so freely before such a king.⁷⁰

Khorenatsi highlights the patriotic conduct and laudable sacrifice of illustrious Armenian figures. He inspires the Armenians with national ideals and, after reflecting on their past glories, he focuses on their present tragedy: fall of the Arshakuni kingdom, the loss of national heroes like Sahak and Mesrop. He expresses that tragedy in his celebrated *Voghb* (Lament), in which the nation's grief and the author's spiritual torment are reflected. This excerpt of the *History* is a model of rare literary perfection:

I lament over you, Armenia; I lament over you who are superior to all the [nations] of the north. For your king and priest, counselor and teacher, have been removed. Peace has been disturbed, disorder has taken root, orthodoxy has been shaken, and heresy has been strengthened through ignorance.

I pity you, church of Armenia, which has lost the splendor of the sanctuary and has been deprived of the noble pastor and his companion. No longer do I see your rational flock pastured in a verdant place and by peaceful waters [cf. Ps. 22:2] nor gathered in a fold and protected from wolves, but scattered to the wilderness and precipices...

O deprivation, O mournful history! How can I endure to bear these woes? How shall I strengthen my mind and tongue and repay in words my fathers for my birth and raising? For they gave me birth through their teaching, and they raised me by sending me to grow up among others. And while they hoped for our return to glory in my most erudite wisdom and perfect

aptitude, while we swiftly making for Byzantium hoped to dance at marriages, being bold and nimble of foot, and to sing wedding songs—now instead of festivities I lament over a tomb and piteously sigh. I did not arrive in time to see them here, to close their eyes, or hear their last words and blessing.

... Who henceforth will respect our instruction? Who will rejoice at the progress of this pupil? Who will express the delight of a father, in part exceeded by this son? Who will silence the insolence of those who rise up in opposition to the wholesome teaching, those who are shaken and rent by every word, alternating many teachers and many books, as one of the fathers said? They are equally displeased at every word and make of themselves a bad example in mocking us and despising us as unstable and devoid of any useful science. Who will silence and reprimand them, console us with praise, and put a limit to talking and silence?

As I reflect on these matters, sighing and tears burst out inside me and make me wish to utter sad and mournful words. Nor do I know how to compose my lament or over whom to weep. [Should it be] my unfortunate young king, abandoned with his family through their wicked planning and who before dying [has tasted] death, cast down with dishonor from his throne? Or is it myself, for from my head has been removed the beautiful and advantageous crown that brings wealth? Or is it my father and high priest and his lofty mind who, wherever he went, brought perfect eloquence, whereby he guided and brought harmony, and taking the reins into his hands directed persons and bridled dissenting tongues [cf. James 1:26]? Or [is it] myself, who remain abandoned and deprived of the affection of [his] spirit? Or my parent, the source of my instruction, who irrigated justice and with a flood banished iniquity? Or myself, dried out and desiccated by thirst for the waters of his advice? Or is it the disasters that have befallen my country or the expectation for the future?

Who will join us in telling of these things, sharing our grief? Who, suffering with us, will assist our account or help us inscribe it on stelae? Awake, Jeremiah, awake and lament like a prophet over the miseries we have suffered and the distress we

shall endure. Foretell the rise of ignorant shepherds as once did Zacharias in Israel [cf. Zach. 11:16].⁷¹

The work's literary nature is characteristic not only of objectively constructed figures, which communicate to the story a breath of real life and create distinct relations but also is breathtaking and consummate in imagery and description. Here the natural beauty of Armenia is depicted and Khorenatsi's literary taste and keen perception are displayed (descriptions of Yervandakert, Shamiramakert, and the building of the city of Karin).

Below is the description of the beautiful Ararat plains:

But Aramaneak took all his host and hastened to the northeast. He descended into a deep valley surrounded by high mountain peaks, through which a tumultuous river flowed from the west. The eastern plain, you might say, was supine; its width extended to the side of the sun. At the feet of the mountains gushed forth many limpid steams, which came together to form gentle rivers. At the borders by the base of the mountains and edges of the plain in their youthful course they flowed like strolling maidens. But the mountain to the south that faced the sun, whose shining white summit rose straight up from the earth—it being a three-day journey, as one of our country-men said, for a well-girded man to encircle—as it gradually rose to a steep point was truly an old man of a mountain amid the younger ones.⁷²

Khorenatsi is also very adept in the description of battle scenes, which are filled with action and motion. A scene from the Dzirav battle follows:

The battle was waged on the plain called Dzirav, and the battle lines confronted each other. The youth among the valiant Armenian princes, willingly fighting like champions, came forward between the lines under the leadership of General Smbat the aspet, son of Bagarat, who was from the Bagratuni family. Their contemporaries from the Persian army also came forward and rushed into the space between the lines. The two groups mingled together. And when the Persian youth turned

back, ours followed them closely. And just as a storm [blows] the leaves from the trees of the forest, so they quickly dismounted from their horses with their lances and cut them as cold corpses to the ground before they could reach their own line. When the Persians began to surround ours, they withdrew behind the protective shields of the Greeks, as into a fortified city, and suffered no harm. For Gorgonos, general of the infantry, surrounded Pap's line with shields as with a wall.⁷³

Philologists have noted that the depiction of military scenes with Movses Khorenatsi, as with other fifth-century historians point to certain analogies with the Biblical Books of the Maccabees.⁷⁴ This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that during the Middle Ages, theological writings of Biblical inspiration or otherwise, were well known in Armenian intellectual circles, which in itself testifies to the cultural ties that existed between peoples of the East. Knowledge of matters biblical on the part of Armenian historians, including Khorenatsi, attests to their great learning and scholarship; they should not be accused of deliberate plagiarism. And, as a consequence, the similarity in descriptions or quotations from the Books of the Maccabees, although indirectly enters the artistic realm, it becomes a literary ornament and should not be considered simple forgery.

Aside from descriptions which create comprehensive artistic pictures, Khorenatsi also makes use of learned and figurative expressions, unique comments about singular individuals or events and strong satirical twists; he does all this through his unique style. Sometimes, with the intention of creating fictional figures or events, Khorenatsi digresses and tells jokes popular at that period.

Shapuh, King Yazkert I's brother, who after Armenian king Vramshapuh's death reigned over Armenia and whom Armenians could not tolerate, once went hunting and fell behind in a rocky area. Atom Mokatsi tauntingly says to him: "Go on, go on, Persian hero, if you are a man." Shapuh replies, "You proceed, for it is the mark of demons to attack rocks."

Again another time they were hunting wild boars among reeds with fire, and Shapuh did not dare to gallop through the dense growth while the fire surrounded it. And looking to both sides he

rode this way and that. A second time Atom said to him: "Persian hero, behold your father is a god, why do you hesitate?" But Shapuh said: "Stop your mocking, cross the fire so that I can follow. Because if I go first my horse will shy." Then Atom derided him: "Surely these are not stones that I should go first. And if you call the Mokatsik demons, I call you Sasanians effeminate." And spurring his horse he crossed the fire as if it were a meadow of flowers, freeing Shapuh. After that he knew that [Shapuh] would not remain silent, so he went over to the land of Mekk.⁷⁵

Description as a literary device and novelistic structure combine to reinforce Khorenatsi's polished and cultivated classical language. He introduces grammatical and linguistic structures and concepts which are clearly superior to the colloquial speech of Pavstos and Parpetsi. Khorenatsi's language is endowed with a rich vocabulary and exhibits a complex syntax. The fact that he was educated in centers of Greek culture and learning and that he was well versed in Greek should not be overlooked. As a consequence of his educational background, Khorenatsi attempted to pattern the Armenian language after the refined composition of Greek and ended up with complex grammatical structures modeled upon the Greek language. Frequently, to create a striking imagery, the author weaves a multilayered grammatical construct with dependent phrases and clauses, and compelling logic, which nevertheless is solid, picturesque, and sweeping.

Khorenatsi's contribution to the lexical development of the Armenian language has been considerable. According to recent studies, Khorenatsi has introduced 800 words into the Armenian language, most of which are used in modern speech: *artasanutium* (recitation), *anrjakan* (dream-like), *barekharn* (temperate), *blradzev* (pyramidal), *hakamitel* (dispute), *makagrutium* (commentary), *haratevel* (persevere), *sharadrel* (compose), *parakanon* (apocryphal), *parunakel* (contain), and *storagrutium* (topography) are some examples.⁷⁶ Having Greek as his model, Khorenatsi attempted to enrich, soften, and polish the Armenian language, which did not have a long written existence. Numerous words expressing interrelations between governmental, scientific, historical, and social life entered the Armenian language through Khorenatsi. Furthermore, he invented several words about nature, the elements,

aesthetics, introspection, literature, art, lifestyles, and labor, which are used to this day.

History of the Armenians is a literary creation. Khorenatsi attempted to establish harmony between context and form. As a result, his descriptive language and style are imbued with metaphors, comparisons, and a colorful style. While this style is evident only in sections inspired by important personalities or events, in the remaining portions of the book he composes simply and history flows with unadorned language.

For centuries, Khorenatsi's book has been used at once as a language, literature, and history textbook in Armenian schools. Generations have been educated by it, and its language and style have thus spread among, and kept intellectually alive by, educated Armenians. Furthermore, as a writer and historian, Khorenatsi has left a lasting mark on Armenian thought. The historians who succeeded him—Sebeos, Ghevond Yerets, Catholicos Hovhannes, and others—have been influenced by Khorenatsi, assimilated the principles of his historiography, and accepted his historical chronology.

Khorenatsi's work, influential as it was over the centuries, has shaped Armenian historical and literary thought and has cultivated good taste. Khorenatsi has dwelt on origins of the Armenian people and has motivated them to go back into history to discover their roots and identity.

History of the Armenians also provides information on Armenia's neighboring peoples—the Persians, Greeks, Syrians, Caucasian Albanians, Alans, Jews, and Georgians—and about the unwritten periods of their nations' histories. In this sense, it is impossible for any historian to ignore Khorenatsi's work when dealing with the history of the Near East. This simply serves to reaffirm Khorenatsi's greatness not only as an Armenian but also as an international phenomenon.

6. Historiography and Philosophy of the Post-Classical Period: Fifth to Seventh Centuries

The vibrant development of literary and cultural life, which immortalized the fifth century as the Golden Century or Golden Age, slowed in the sixth century. This century is known in Armenian history as a somber period, full of years of oppression and rebellion during which the greater part of Armenia came under Byzantine rule. This partition was the result of an agreement reached between the Byzantine emperor Maurice and Persian king Khosrov II. At the same time, Byzantium used the Chalcedonian creed of the Christian Church against the Armenian Church's monophysite beliefs in order to realize its political goals. Although the policies of Persia and Byzantium, followed by the Arab invasions, hindered the progress of literature and art somewhat, the Armenian people experienced a creative, cultural upsurge during the whole of the sixth century as well as, most notably, from the middle of the seventh to the beginning of the eighth centuries. Nikoghayos Adonts, in his work *Armenia in the Age of Justinian*, even considers the second half of the sixth century as "a new epoch in the intellectual life of Armenia" with respect to the activity of the Hellenizing school.¹ Nikoghayos Mar expressed the same opinion in his foreword to the Russian translation of *Bestiary*.² The existence of a group of schools of higher education in the seventh century also attests to this. Among these are the school of Siunik in Tatev, the school of Glak in Taron, the school of Arsharunik in Yeraskhadzor, the school of Mairivank in Bjni, and the school of Dprevank in Shirak. Armenians also demonstrated their skills in the field of architecture. They created buildings and monuments of high art which confirm the aesthetic taste and unique artistry of the early past of the Armenian people (the

churches of Zvartnots, Talin, Aruch, Talish, Hripsime, Gayiane, Odzun, and Mren).

Important figures for the history of Armenian literature in the seventh century include Komitas vardapet, with his constructional and creative activities; Hovhan Mairagometsi, founder of the school of Mairagom; the famous ecclesiast of Dprevank, Barsegh Chon; and the well-known cleric Teodoros Krtenavor. Historians also appeared, though they did not possess the broad intellect of authors of the preceding period. Although acquainted with the legacy of classical historiography of the fifth century, they created works which were more historical than literary in nature. Among these is the work of *SEBEOS* known by the title *Patmutiun i Herakln* (History of Heraclius) or *Sebeosi yepiskoposi patmutiun* (The History of Bishop Sebeos). The dates of Sebeos's birth and death are not known. His work is an important historical source about events of the sixth to seventh centuries in Armenia, Persia, Byzantium, and the Near East in general. Because of this, the publication of *Patmutiun Sebeosi yepiskoposi i Herakln* by Tadeos Mihrdatians (Constantinople, 1851) attracted international attention and became a primary source of study for western Armenologists. Heinrich Hübschmann, Nikoghayos Mar, Joseph Markwart, Alfred von Gutschmid, Edouard Dulaurier, Frederic Macler, and others took up Sebeos's *History*, translating it or contemplating various issues concerning the author and his work.³

Sebeos, like many ancient historians of the Armenians, has, along with the title of his work, given rise to dissension and differing interpretations.⁴ The problem is that Emperor Heraclius is spoken about in only six chapters of the work and never becomes a central figure in Sebeos's *History*. From this point of view the traditional title bearing the name Heraclius remains incomprehensible. Perhaps the title given to the work would become more understandable if we take into consideration the fact that such an important event as the liberation of Jerusalem and the Holy Cross from the Persians was carried out by and during the time of the Emperor Heraclius. Notwithstanding this, Sebeos devoted more space to the life and accomplishments of Persian rather than Byzantine kings. In particular, events of the thirty-seven-year reign of King Khosrov II Parviz (591-628) are given in such detail (they take up nearly half the book), that it involuntarily turns Khosrov into the main hero of

the *History*. One would think that Sebeos had more admiration for Khosrov's courageous acts and for the Persians in general, than for the Byzantines. This is the reason that one of the most recent scholars of Sebeos, Georg Abgarian, finds that the work of Sebeos entitled *History of Heraclius* has not reached us. He conjectures that the manuscript which we have under that name is not by Sebeos since this work deals more with the Persian King Khosrov than the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius.⁵

Abgarian writes, "Heraclius in general did not enjoy that extraordinary authority and love among us that philologists have attributed to him."⁶ "Not being able to stop King Khosrov, Heraclius allowed him to conquer Jerusalem and capture the Cross. This event stirred the Christian world more than the liberation of the Cross by Heraclius, which is why the capture and destruction of Jerusalem is described more often than the liberation of the Cross."⁷

The first two books of Sebeos's *History* have raised some philological doubts, while Malkhasiants poses the question of whether the first four chapters belong to Sebeos. This suspicion was raised for the first time by Kerovpe Patkanian in the preface to the Russian translation of the *History* in 1862.⁸

Meticulous studies have led to the conclusion that those chapters do not form part of Sebeos's *History* but belong to an anonymous writer or Pseudo-Sebeos, who lived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This is the reason that subsequently some philologists published or translated this work without the anonymous writer's section or were not familiar with this section.

This work, in medieval sources associated with the name Sebius or sometimes Eusebius, and the traditional title *History of Heraclius*, is composed of two sections and includes the history of the Armenian people from ancient times until A.D. 661. The first section concisely relates ancient legends of the Armenians, the fall of the Artashesian kingdom, the origin of the Mamikonian clan, Persian rule, and the Armenians' rebellion in the middle of the fifth century against Yazkert II. The second section has a preface and basically covers events of the sixth and seventh centuries, reaching the year 661. The second section is the valuable part of the work, wherein Sebeos relates the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians in 614, the wars of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius and Persian King Khosrov II, and the relations of these two

states with each other and the Armenians. This is followed by information on the political maturation of the Arabs, the Arab invasions through which Sasanian rule is destroyed, and Arab rule over the entire Near East. And since in this complex historical period Armenians had ties with or were subjected to various nations, Sebeos's work possesses historical value and significance not only for Armenians but also for Persians, Byzantines, Arabs, Assyrians, Medes, Huns, Georgians, Albanians, and other peoples.

Sebeos presents Armenia's history in the context of seventh-century international relations. In reality his political concern in these relations lies in Armenia's national interests, in issues of the preservation of independence of his land, and the Armenian Church. It is for this reason that he devotes a great deal of space to Smbat Bagratuni, Teodoros Rshtuni, and other national figures and their heroic acts in opposition to the Kushans and Arabs.

Armenia, which after the partition of 387 attempted to safeguard its semi-independent status between the Byzantines and Persians, encountered continual difficulties in the matter of preserving its national rights. If the Persians had become more moderate after the explosive rebellions directed against Persia in the fifth century, the Byzantines on the other hand had become more audacious. It is these relations that Sebeos describes, elucidating the events of these tumultuous centuries. In his pages are also preserved the letter of Byzantine Emperor Maurice (582-602) to the Persian Shah Khosrov II, in which Byzantium's political aims concerning the Armenians are exposed. "An unruly and disobedient nation lives between us, and, he [Maurice] says, they cause trouble. But come, he says, I will gather mine and assemble them in Thrace and you gather yours and command that they be taken to the East. For if they die, foes die, and if they kill, they kill enemies, and we shall live in peace. For if they remain in their country, there will be no rest for us."⁹

And Maurice began to deport thousands of Armenians from their ancestral lands and send them to Thrace or the western areas of Asia Minor, while the Armenian cavalry, led by Sahak Mamikonian and Smbat Bagratuni (the latter was later exiled to Africa), was dispatched to fight against the Avars and Slavs. At the same time the Byzantine Chalcedonian Church exercised pressure on the Armenian Church. However if Byzantium succeeded through its political and religious

influence in separating the Georgian Church from the Armenian and Albanian (608) and winning it to its side, it was not able to do the same with the Armenians. Sebeos relates important evidence to us on this topic, presenting the long letter sent to the Byzantine Chalcedonian Church and the Byzantine Emperor, which Armenian Catholicos Nerses III (641-661), the statesman Teodoros Rshtuni, clerics, and leading *nakharars* composed. The letter was written in 648 and was ratified by the church council of Dvin, refusing proposals of the Byzantine Chalcedonian Church. The peace treaty signed between the Arab governor and Armenian Prince Teodoros Rshtuni in 652, which Sebeos describes, is also a significant accomplishment in the history of Armenian diplomacy.

Thus, Sebeos's *History* reflects the struggle of Armenian *nakharars* and Church against Persians, Byzantines, and Arabs in those difficult times. Through these battles rise the Bagratuni princes, who play a significant role in securing the semi-independent status of Armenians during the Arab period. While writing a predominantly political history, Sebeos also tells about the construction of the country's edifices, including the founding of the churches of Hripsime and Zvartnots.

Although Sebeos's *History* is written in a simple, inartistic style, it includes stories and traditions prevalent at the time and is flavored throughout with folk sayings. All of this gives his work a certain literary value. This is true of the artistically drawn figures of Smbat Bagratuni and Mushegh Mamikonian, who perform unselfish acts and heroics for the goal of liberation. Smbat's epic fight against animals in the circus and artistic descriptions of Mushegh Mamikonian's many feats share the same characteristics. Events connected with Vahan Mamikonian's rebellion and the portrayal of Persian society are of literary merit. So, too, are the accession of Persian general Vahram Mihrevandak to the head of government, the interesting events which took place between him and Mushegh, and the tradition about the Persian queen Shirin's devotion to Christianity.

Sebeos was the first to relate in his work the romantic love episode between the Persian king Khosrov and Armenian Shirin, which in later years spread throughout the Near East, Central Asia, and India and is found in more than sixty literary renditions.¹⁰ Armenian historians Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, Tovma Artzruni, Stepanos Taronetsi

(Asoghik), Mkhitar Anetsi, Vardan Areveltsi, Simeon Aparanetsi, and others used Sebeos's *History of Heraclius* in subsequent centuries. As a work of international significance, Sebeos's work attracted the attention of orientalists, Byzantinists, and scholars of Caucasian studies, who translated it into Russian (Kerovpe Patkanian in 1862, Stepan Malkhasiants in 1939), French (Frédéric Macler in 1904), and German (in excerpts by Heinrich Hübschmann in 1875).

MOVSES KAGHANKATVATSI's book *Patmutiun Aghvanits ashkharhi* (History of the Land of the Albanians) is also worthy of note among works of the seventh century.¹¹ Movses, whose dates of birth and death are unknown, lived in the village of Kaghankatuk in the province of Utik. The history he wrote of the Albanian land from its origins until his own time is the only historical source about the Albanian country that has reached us.¹²

The work is composed of three books. Movses Kaghankatvatsi is recognized as author of the first two books, while the third was written by Movses Daskhurantsi, who lived in the tenth century and continued Kaghankatvatsi's history, bringing events up to the year 988.¹³

The subject of the first and second books of *History of the Land of the Albanians* is basically life in the seventh century, to which Kaghankatvatsi was an eyewitness. Not only are the Armenian people of Utik and Artsakh introduced here but so are the Albanian tribes residing north of the Kur River, their lives, mores, customs, and pagan beliefs and sects. Kaghankatvatsi's main goal is to compose the history of the Albanian Church, for which he extracts material from works of fourth- and fifth-century Armenian historians and many hagiological and doctrinal sources. So that the Albanian Church's origin through apostles and the Armenian Gregory the Illuminator is made hallow, Kaghankatvatsi describes how relics of saints are brought there, including even Gregory's mortal remains, and buried in Glkhovank.

In doctrinal matters the Albanian Church took sides with the Armenian Church and remained its ally to the end, while the Georgian Church detached itself. In order to preserve Christianity, King Vache II of Albania tenaciously battled against Persians, then resigned from throne and kingdom to live the life of a recluse. The Christian resolve of Vache amazed Armenian Catholicos Giut I (461-471), who glorified Vache's heroic life in free verse form in his *Tught* (Epistle), addressed to the king:

Everything of your regiment is two-fold. If armor defended the body, there also was an armor of the faith. If the helmet was for defense against swords, there also was a helmet of salvation. If you had a shield resisting blows against your virtuous chest, with it you also had shield of the patience of faith. If the arrow through your strength flew straight, so, too, the holy prayers of your supplications immediately would be found way above, in heaven before God. If the sword scintillated in your virtuous hand, so too the illumination of your faith among the angels would discharge lightning. Your banners are the banners of heaven and the pikes of your spear are luminous like silver strings [beams] of the sun.¹⁴

Catholicos Giut also praises King Urnair and in his *Letter* to this king creates through moving descriptions a turbulent and disconcerting picture of Persian persecutions:

... And the all-embracing sea they sent against you. Stormy weather descended upon it; multitudinous waves moved and agitated it. It began to rumble, rise, spread out, to defile field and mountain. At the same time a host of pagan nations, accompanied by frightful beasts, ensigns of varied symbols, sonorous trumpets, clamour of horns, a forest of spears, gleaming swords, gold-embossed shields, and thick and large lances reached you. The earthly wished to frighten you, the spiritual, and the defiled wished to destroy the undefiled, and the ungodly wished to cut you, the scion of the godly, off from the roots. Twice and thrice they were defeated but were not put to shame.¹⁵

History of the Land of the Albanians tells of the political and religious state of the country, the Aranshahik and Mihranian clans, and Mashtots's establishment in the eastern regions of Armenia of an alphabet and literature. It describes raids of the Khazars and Huns and their barbarities and customs as well as Arab rule in Albania, Armenia, Georgia, and countries further to the north.

The crowding together of many miraculous tales, doctrinal disputes, relics, and sects is considered to be the defective side of Kaghankatvatsi's work. This interferes with the consecutive flow of events, making the work "an inconsistent collative composition." His style is sometimes colloquial with simple, dynamic addresses and dialogues but often is elevated, rich in synonyms and erudite composition with the skill of one well versed in classical Armenian. In the sections where the historian writes of historical events without biblical citations his speech is simple and fluent, whereas in the remaining parts, when he includes religious literature of a diverse nature and various types of letters, his language and style become very dense. Despite all this, Kaghankatvatsi does have descriptive talent and the ability to observe and relate.

Movses Kaghankatvatsi's work contains *DAVTAK KERTOIGH's* poem *Voghbk i mahn Jevansheri metzi ishkhanin* (Elegy on the Death of the Great Prince Jevansher) which was written on the occasion of the tragic death of Prince Jevansher of Albania. Jevansher was an outstanding political figure (637-670) who was treacherously killed by an intimate friend, causing sorrow to his contemporaries.

Alongside spiritual ecclesiastic songs, metrical works of a lay nature existed in the fifth to seventh centuries. Their themes sprung forth from contemporary life or national folk traditions. "Elegy on the Death of the Great Prince Jevansher," Davtak Kertogh's funereal poem composed of thirty-six lines whose initial letters form an acrostic of the Armenian alphabet, is such a poem.¹⁶ The author, who lived in the seventh century and who on account of his knowledge and talent was given the epithet *Kertogh* (Poet), bitterly mourns the loss of Jevansher, praises the renown and strength of the latter and then anathemizes and curses the cruel murderer.

The rock, living and powerful, tumbled down
 And the bulwark of strength was dashed to pieces,
 The tower of reason was overthrown,
 And the wall of prosperity, breached, was destroyed.
 Our peace turned to bitterness,
 And the gates of yore poured forth on us,
 For the magnificent sovereignty was destroyed,
 And the light of the wondrous state went out.

He sat like a lion in (his) lair
And hearing of him, enemies trembled;
The lords of clans and all princes
Obeyed him with awe and love.
Throughout the whole land arose his fame,
And to the ends of the world spread his name;
For (his) artful strength and wise intellect
The universe glorified in ceremonious tones.

The king of Greeks and princes of the South
Feverishly pleaded to see the lord;
And with very respectful greetings they received him
And crowning him with glory they greatly honored
him.¹⁷

The inner strength of the development in the poem is the impetus of Kertogh's emotions and the crescendos and diminuendos of suffering radiating from his tormented soul. This is followed by a flood of merciless curses directed at the murderer, whose formulations again reveal the author's vivid imagination.

May paths entangle him as he flees,
And birds of the sky circle above him,
May crows of the valley glide towards him,
And wild beasts lie in wait for him!

May the fire of Herod be sent against him,
And worms and mice be born on him;
May heart-rending burning inflame him,
And then consume the lord-killer body of his.

May the hand which reached out to kill the lord,
And feet which trampled upon the wondrously beautiful
countenance
Scorchingly blistered with the leprosy producing
disease,

Ringworms affix themselves to him with infectious
sores.

May he hide and rest in the shade of briars
And broods of vipers harm him,
And poisons of the aspicks spill upon him,
And with the most violent swelling make him burst.¹⁸

From the point of view of literary genre Davtak Kertogh's "Elegy" was, of course, not a novelty in Armenian literature. Information about elegists and funeral orations, in which the dying individual or hero is honored and eulogized, are preserved in folk tales. These songs of lamentation of pagan times survived into the Christian centuries. The elegies described in the histories of Pavstos and Khorenatsi are such examples. However the "Elegy" of Kertogh is the most ancient poem created with a secular content that has reached us.

The "Elegy," which has been called a poem, is also valuable as an expression of social and political moods and reflects the spirit of the times.

Evident in the poem are folk traditions, ideas garnered from ancient mythology and Greek fables. Davtak has a vivid style and expressions which impart a literary charm to his work.

Movses Kaghankatvatsi's history as well as Davtak Kertogh's poem are written in Armenian. Armenian was not only a spoken language in the Armenian areas affixed to Albania, areas often called the "Eastern Districts of Armenia," but also was considered the entire country's official language.

The work *Patmutiun Taron* (History of Taron) by HOVHAN MAMIKONIAN (whose dates of birth and death are unknown), thanks to the copious folk sources which the author used in his work, is an artistic-literary composition. It was written at the request of Armenian Catholicos Nerses III Shinogh (641-661) and consists of two parts.¹⁹

The first part of the history, ascribed to fourth-century Syrian bishop ZENOB GLAK, presents circumstances of the Armenian conversion to Christianity and Trdat's valorous feats and is not of particular value. Zenob claims to be Gregory the Illuminator's secretary and asserts that his work was written prior to that of Agatangeghos.²⁰

The second part of the history covers events which took place in the region of Taron towards the end of the sixth and first half of the seventh centuries as well as the struggle of Armenians against Persians (the rebellion of 571-572). Here primarily events of Sebeos's era (sixth and seventh centuries) are related. However, unlike Sebeos's history, this work is more fictionalized because Hovhan Mamikonian extensively uses popular legends, having as his aim the praise of Taron and its heroes, the Mamikonians. The story of Mushegh is fictional in nature. It embellishes the Mamikonian clan's heroic struggle in the war of Taron against the Persian yoke. And these heroic battles in which the Mamikonian ancestors, Mushegh, Gail Vahan, Smbat, and others are delineated as brave and clever individuals who win splendid victories over the myriad enemy armies are described with vivid images and metrical sections.

Battles, details of fights, murders, ridicule, and vanity occupy a large place in this collection of folk and traditional tales which spread throughout Taron. Armenians with the aid of St. Karapet (the "Forerunner") always defeated the Persians and mercilessly massacred them. In this sense, the work is so fictional that it does not have value as a historical primary source but has a particular importance for shedding light on aristocratic and ecclesiastical society and mentality in the seventh and eighth centuries. Hovhan Mamikonian's *History of Taron* is also, of course, written with a lively folk spirit, rich in literary imagery and satirical dialogue.

The Arab yoke created onerous conditions throughout the land in the eighth century. Armenian culture stagnated. National literature, with its historical, philosophical, and scientific branches as well as translational works, had almost ground to a halt. Only doctrinal church literature continued to survive. If in the seventh century more than a score of names in Armenian literature and culture appeared, in the eighth century only a handful are known, one of which is *GHEVOND VARDAPET* (or *Ghevond Yerets*, "the Priest,"). The dates of his birth and death have not been established. He tells about the grave oppressions of the Arab invasions and domination in his work *Patmutiun Ghevondia metzi vardapeti hayots* (Ghevond the Great Vardapet's History of the Armenians).²¹ This work encompasses the period from 632 to 788 in Armenia, including events of the destruction of Sasanian Persia and the establishment of Arab rule.

It is of historiographical value for the study of history of the Armenian people as well as for countries of the Near East, especially since Arabs in the eighth century still did not have a developed historiography.

Ghevond's book reflects the mentality of his age, affected by bloody chapters of liberation (rebellions of 747-50 and 774-775), Arab invasions and serious incidents over taxation, famine and epidemics, massacres and defeats, victories, and unyielding combat. In imitation of especially Yeghishe from among Armenian authors, Ghevond Yerets comes forth not as an impartial historian but as a writer with emotions who becomes embittered by the Arabs' harshness and mercilessness. He records the holocaust of Armenian *nakharars* in the church of Nakhijevan, the harrowing murders of Armenian notables in Dvin, descriptions of destructive tax collection during the days of Abd ul-Aziz, his successors, and Harun al-Rashid with striking images that approach lamentation.

The historian's patriotic exhortations become evident in his depiction of the organization of Armenian resistance forces and the acts of valor and victories of Armenian fighters. Some examples include the description of Teodoros Rshtuni, who with his wise actions was able to achieve successes, and that of the splendid victories won by Armenian braves near Vardanakert and Gukans village.

The portrayal of the battle which took place in 775 at the town of Archesh is a splendid artistic scene of heroic struggle. The rebelling Armenians wage the last battle of the revolt for the sake of their salvation: "Let us die bravely for our land and our nation and let our eyes not see our sanctuaries and sites of glorification of our God be trod underfoot and profaned. But rather let the sword of [our] enemies first of all be directed against us; then let them do whatever they will."²²

Ghevond Yerets does not have a profound and wide-ranging historical scope but is the possessor of a simple, unadorned language and a somewhat epic writing style, seasoned with authorial interpositions in which separate stories have the flavor of folk tales. He is the first Armenian historian who used the Armenian calendar. Until him, the chronology of historical events was determined in accordance with the regnal years of kings.

Ghevond is an eyewitness to events and bears the mentality of his century. He brings forth sad and bloody pages for the recording of

which, writes Nerses Akinian, a "firm heart and steady hands were necessary."²³ He observes calamity, misfortune, and destruction from the point of view of a Christian historian. He explains all this by the will of providence, as punishment for sin. Ghevond's *History* is quite a serious work, especially when we take into account the bitter events of this period of downfall he is investigating. It is through this, too, that the value of his book and the historian's abilities become more praiseworthy.

* * *

Belles lettres, which developed in the pages of historiography, certainly was not the sole form of literature which reflected the public's literary tastes, conceptions, and intellectual level. In the fifth to eighth centuries, together with Armenian literature and historiography, philosophy and natural sciences also flourished, and in turn they, too, influenced the whole culture. Consciousness formed under the influence of Greek logic found it easy to express certain philosophical ideas. Prose with a scientific content was created, dealing with various philosophical issues and aspects of nature. It was composed in an accessible and charming writing style and refined not only literary taste but also the level of ideas. The influence of Greek philosophy upon Armenians was notable. A large number of Armenian students, many of whom were to become renowned in the future, studied in the Greco-Roman centers of Rome, Antioch, Edessa, and Athens.

In Athens, *PARUIR HAIKAZN* (275-367) enjoyed the fame of being a celebrated rhetorician, under the name of Prohaeresius. None of his works have been preserved. However his student and biographer Eunapius of Sardis, and the distinguished figures of Byzantine literature Gregory Nazianzenus and Basil of Cesarea, also his students, wrote about his life and dazzling oratorical art.²⁴

Armenian by nationality, Prohaeresius lived and worked far from his fatherland, became a Christian, and was considered one of the greatest rhetoricians of the ancient world. He was compared to Hermes Trismegistus and Cicero. Even during his own lifetime, a bronze statue of him was erected with the following inscription: *Regina rerum Roma Regi Eloquentiae* (The Queen of Cities Rome, to the King of Eloquence).

Among practitioners of Armenian philosophical prose—including Davit Anhaght, Mambre, Stepanos Siunetsi, and Hovhan Odznetsi—*YEZNIK KOGHBATSI* (c. 380–450) occupies a special place. He was one of Mashtots's students and participated in translation of the Bible into Armenian. Koghbatsi studied in Edessa and Constantinople and entered the service of the Church, becoming bishop of Bagrevand. Among his works, only the celebrated *Yeghtz aghandots* (Refutation of Sects) which is directed against Persian Zoroastrianism (Mazdeism) and paganism and defends Christianity and the Armenian Church, has been preserved.²⁵ Yeznik used many ancient Greek sources and created his own distinct philosophy. He cited in translation sections of works by Greek authors, including Epiphanius of Cyprus's *Panarion*, Aristides the Athenian's *Apology*, Basil of Cesarea's *Hexaemeron*, Methodius's *On Freedom of the Will*, and other works. Of these, translations from the Athenian's *Apology* and Methodius's *On Freedom of the Will* have the value of primary texts, since their Greek originals have been lost without a trace. Yeznik's monistic philosophy establishes the existence of a unique and real god. Against this is contrasted the teachings of ancient philosophy (Platonism, Epicurian atheism, and the Pythagorean, Peripatic, and Stoic schools) which were used against Christian doctrine and whose followers did not scientifically arrive at an understanding of the idea of divinity. The influx of Christian sects with their preachers and literature into Armenia was intolerable for Yeznik. The most dangerous of them was for him the Marcionite sect. Alongside all this, pagan polytheism and popular superstitions concerning fate, the stars, and individual objects and appearances, still existed, which he refuted with brilliant intellectual skill. Yeznik Koghbatsi saw only one being and soul in nature and found that it had existence from the Beginning. He did not seek confirmation of the idea of God in reason or science, but took refuge in faith. Koghbatsi saw good and evil in man, in man's reason, and examined causes for the development of evil.

Refutation of Sects not only establishes the Christian world view and philosophy in Armenian literature but also displays the era's problems, social conceptions, life, customs, and morals. It is a brilliant piece of writing; a beautiful and solid composition which has had a great impact on Armenian literature and philosophy in subsequent centuries.

Perhaps the following excerpt can convey to the reader a little flavor of the work:

Now, the sun is good, beautiful in nature and useful, and necessary for us and all (other) creatures found under the heavens; just as a lamp is lit in a large house, between the ceiling and floor, in order to remove shadow and darkness between two great vessels. However it does not know if it has existence or not, because it is not one of those endowed with reason and mind. The rest of the inanimate creatures are also the same. Neither water, nor fire, nor earth, nor air know whether they exist or do not exist, and continuously offer that service for which they were formed, being guided by him who created them. And we neither disparage nor worship them but, looking upon them, praise their maker and founder, because they exist for our needs and the glory of their creator.

How can we worship the sun, which sometimes, called upon as a servant, performs that service for which it is appointed, and sometimes leaves and hides as if frightened, allowing the darkness to fill up this large house. From time to time it darkens as reproach and shame to its worshipers, declaring that "I am not worthy of worship; but he is, who keeps me luminous throughout the daytime, and hides me in the night, and from time to time causes darkness." And that silent one, like a speaker, protests with its mouth, that "I am not worthy to be worshipped, but I myself shall worship."²⁶

DAVIT ANHAGHT is one of the eminent philosophers of the fifth and sixth centuries. The exact dates of his birth and death are unknown. According to old Armenian sources he was born circa 470 in the village of Nergin and because of this sometimes is also called Davit Nerginatsi. He studied in Greek centers, particularly Alexandria, at the philosophical school of Olympiodoros the Junior. Having already achieved acclaim and at an advanced age, Davit returned to Armenia, where he died and was installed in the ranks of saints like Khorenatsi and Yeghishe. He is known in Armenian literature by the epithet "trismegistus philosopher" while in Greek and Roman circles he was proclaimed "invincible" for his epistemology. His *Girk sahmanats* (Book of Definitions), *Verlutzutiun neratzutiann Porpiuri* (Analysis of Porphyry's *Eisagoge*) *Meknutiun storogutiantsn Aristoteli*

(Commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*) and *Meknutiun i verlutzakann Aristoteli* (Commentary on the *Analytics* of Aristotle) (the first three also exist in Greek) have reached us. They played an essential role in the creation and development of medieval Armenian philosophy. *Book of Definitions* (also called *Definitions of Philosophy*), in which Davit presents his entire philosophical range, is his most esteemed work. He proposes six definitions which he has taken from the philosophies of Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle. They are: "philosophy is a science about existence," "philosophy is a science about divine and human things," "philosophy is concern with death," "philosophy is imitating God to the best of human ability," "philosophy is the art of arts and the science of sciences," and the final one, "philosophy is love of wisdom." Davit's definitions, which interpreted the ancient philosophers' theses and put them to use as well as the four methods examined in the analysis of Porphyry's *Eisagoge*, division, definition, proof, and analysis, were passed on to Byzantine, Persian, and Arab philosophers. An adherent of Neoplatonism who conjoined theories of the ancient philosophers Aristotle, Plato, and Pythagoras, Davit Anhaght with his works established the foundations of Armenian scientific philosophy. His works have had many commentaries and served for hundreds of years as textbooks in medieval Armenia's curricula for higher education.

The legacy of seventh century scientist *ANANIA SHIRAKATSI* (his dates of birth and death are uncertain) in the field of natural sciences is considerable. It is possible to consider him the founder of these sciences in Armenia. He studied in Trabzon at the school of the famous Greek scientist Tychikos, became an astronomer, calendar expert, geographer, and mathematician, and wrote textbooks such as *Haghags hartsman yev lutzman* (On Problems and Solutions) with tables of the four arithmetical operations: addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. He also wrote many works on mathematics and cosmology, which attest to the prevalent level of science in seventh-century Armenia. Among Shirakatsi's noteworthy works are *Mnatsordk banits* (Chronology of Events) and *Tiezeragitutiun yev tomar* (Cosmogony and Calendar), in which he explains different aspects of nature, movements of the celestial system including bodies such as the sun and moon, eclipses, and issues of global balance. Most importantly, following Ptolemy's views, he confirms that the earth is round. Anania Shirakatsi had a great influence on medieval natural science and

philosophy, while his works unendingly educated generations for centuries.

Armenians in the fifth and subsequent centuries, as a result of Armenia's political insecurity, through deportation or emigration, settled in the Byzantine Empire. They played a vigorous part in that country's political as well as scholarly and cultural life, giving it numerous famous emperors and scholars. Intellectual life in Byzantium, which weakened in the seventh and eighth centuries due to unfavorable political events, underwent a renaissance in the ninth century which continued until the destruction of Constantinople. Armenians played a big role in this rebirth.

In the eighth century, Armenian astronomer Pankratios (Bagrat) was renowned. His aristocratic clan gave many distinguished people to Byzantine history, including Photius (future Patriarch), a noted Armenian scholar of encyclopaedic abilities; and Caesar Bardas (Vard Mamikonian), a cultured individual who in the Magnaura palace of Constantinople founded a university at whose head stood Levon Tesaghatsi (famous under the name Leo the Philosopher). The latter was a descendent of Pankratios's *nakharar* clan and achieved a great name as philosopher, mathematician, and astronomer. Leo the Philosopher was the cousin of Constantinople's universally known Patriarch the scholar John the Grammarian, and was grandson of Pankratios. In the tenth century, Byzantine learning found its Maecenas in the person of the grandson of Emperor Basil I, of Armenian descent. This was Constantine Porphyrogenitus who was glorified for his multifaceted intellectual abilities.

7. Sacred Music: *Sharakans*

Beginning with the Golden Age, the Armenian spiritual song experienced an upsurge, together with Armenian historiographical, hagiographical, philosophical, and doctrinal literature.

Traditional Armenian pagan poetry which arose before and during the period of the Artashesian kingdom (second century B.C.) and which consisted of historical songs and narratives woven around heroic deeds as well as epic and lyric accounts, did not serve as the basis for subsequent Armenian written poetry which was Christian in essence.¹

The pagan and the Christian had opposing conceptions of life. For the pagan, the present world was the important one; for the Christian, it was the next world. The differences between the two were deep, accounting for the great gap between Christian literature and the ancient Armenian pagan oral tradition of national epic ballads, the so-called Goghtan songs. This was the reason that in subsequent centuries pagan songs of joy and mourning, which comprised a part of Armenia's lyrical poetry, were ignored and subjected to contempt by fathers of the Armenian Church. Pagan poetry and popular songs were forgotten as a consequence of the separation of folklore from written literature.

Ancient Armenian lay songs and folklore with its national, eastern character found no place in the pages of books and endured only in popular oral tradition. In contradistinction, Armenian ecclesiastical poetry developed, acquiring an ideology in opposition to the pagan and, following the West, created a rich literature. In these centuries, Christian literature in all its aspects rejected and repudiated pagan ideas and worship, national beliefs, fables, and pagan songs and instead disseminated biblical stories and ancient Jewish prayers and psalms. The breach between lay-popular and spiritual-ecclesiastical poetry became inescapable; they totally separated from each other, and each continued to coexist independently, though mutually influencing each other.

The foundation of ecclesiastical poetry was Christianity, an ideology which for Armenians gave meaning to their existence and

served as a base for the development of national consciousness. Christianity had its influence on the Armenian psyche and literature since it possessed lofty qualities capable of affecting and changing the nature of Armenian paganism. After Armenia adopted Christianity, the nation's vision of its existence and prosperity were intimately and exclusively attached to the teachings of the new-found religion, which Armenian learning and culture could not ignore. Consequently, it is not surprising that at the beginning of Armenian literature, ancient Armenian epic narrations, songs based on legends, and the folk-*gusan* motives were not cultivated and did not develop.

No matter how colorful the life and tradition of pagan Armenia and its joyous music were, nonetheless, during and after the century of creation of Armenian letters and literature, the influence of the Bible reigned supreme in Armenia; the ideology of denying the world and spiritual piety, since the monopoly of Armenian letters and literature belonged to the Armenian Church. The flourishing of Christian faith and ethos left its imprint on all branches of Armenian culture and formed the artistic contents of those centuries. This is also the reason that ancient Armenian literature bears a religious-ecclesiastical character, be it in doctrinal, hagiographical, or historical writing.

The first specimens of written Armenian lyric poetry are spiritual—the *sharakans*, which arose in the Golden Age of Armenian literature (fifth century) almost as a distinct genre and endured until the end of the fifteenth century. The *sharakan* is a hymn (ὕμνος), a religious poem written with clear style and content, dedicated to the Lord's feast days of Christian doctrine, to the Apostles and saints, and aimed at glorifying and praising God the Creator, the Incarnation of Christ, and the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Endowed with lofty spiritual ideals, *sharakans* made church services more solemn and inspiring and served the spiritual needs of the people, to elevate their piety and Christian faith.²

Prior to creation of their own spiritual music, psalms and hymns from the Bible were sung in Armenian churches, following Jewish custom. Armenians were also familiar with Greek and Assyrian religious music since, until the creation of the Armenian alphabet, services were conducted in these two languages.

After the translation of the Bible (fifth century), the *Pataragamatuits*³ (Missal) was put together and a new collection of the

Psalms of David and prayers, the *Zhamagirk* (Breviary), appeared. Church service and ritual were thus gradually organized and reformed through Armenianized liturgical texts.

The *sharakan*, which was dubbed thus in the twelfth century, is the most widespread type of Armenian spiritual song. Like the mystery of the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Ghost), it is composed of three stanzas which are sung in the same melody. While *sharakans* have an immediate connection to Church holidays, the *tagh*, another type of spiritual song, was dedicated to different religious situations not directly connected with church services.

Another type of spiritual song in prose, called *gandz* (from Persian *ganz*, meaning "religious song"), is sung both inside and outside the Church. These are performed during church services and feasts and while exalting martyrs. They are practically devoid of fervor and individuality. Aside from these three major types of Armenian spiritual chants, there are also songs of greeting (*avetis*) and blessing of the harvest.

The *sharakans*, whose first authors were Mesrop Mashtots and Sahak Partev, were called *ktsord* (antiphon, anthem), and were sung right after the monotonous psalms. These songs enlivened the church's lengthy ceremony and captured a distinct place in the service. The Gospel formed the subject matter of the *ktsord* which frequently were woven from its exact words; later they were transformed into original creations, preserving their biblical character. Their authors adapted these songs to their contemporaries' spiritual taste and perceptions as well as national-popular needs.

Created in the eighth century were the *kanons* (from the Greek word "canon," transformed in Armenian into the word *karg*, "order") which were spiritual songs dedicated to particular holidays and individuals of the Church. Because each *kanon* was subdivided into a series of songs, the number of new songs increased in the services.

The first to utilize *kanons* among the Armenians was Stepanos Siunetsi (eighth century), who had lived in Greece for many years and spread the use of *kanons* through the Armenian Church, following the Greek example. Each song comprising part of the *kanon* is called a *sharakan*. Like the eight canons of psalmody they contain the following eight types: *Orhnutium* (Blessing), *Harts* (Fathers), *Metzatsustse* (Encomium), *Ter yerknits* (Lord of the Heavens), *Mankunk* (Infants),

and *Voghormia* (Mercy) which were performed during the morning and evening services; *Chashun* (Dining), at noontime; while *Hambardzin* (Ascension) was performed in the evening. Although the subject matter of *sharakans* was generally spiritual, nonetheless, these eight types differ from each other by their methods of representation, motifs, and structure.

According to recent studies, the collection of spiritual chants called *Sharaknots*, together with the *Breviary*, is believed to have been compiled in the fifth century with the participation of Hovhannes Mandakuni. According to thirteenth-century historians Kirakos Gandzaketsi and Vardan Areveltsi, Catholicos Nerses Shinogh (seventh century), with the aim of introducing a unified order within church music, designated bishop Barsegh Chon to edit the *Sharaknots*, which was called *Chonentir*.⁴ Subsequently the *Sharaknots* was edited by Stepanos Siunetsi (eighth century), Khosrov Andzevatsi (tenth century), Nerses Shnorhali (twelfth century), and perhaps others. Editions in later centuries are unknown.

This collection of *sharakans* embraces many different chants of the fifth to fifteenth centuries: *sharakans*, *gandzes*, spiritual verses (*tagh*), and *avetishes* which were dedicated to various feasts of the Armenian Church, written by different authors. Philology faces many obstacles in trying to determine the authors of these songs.⁵

Catholicos Mashtots Yeghivardetsi in 870 compiled a book of ritual called *Mashtots* where the order of usage of *sharakans* for an entire year was set forth. The Armenian Church to the present has preserved this established order of *sharakans*. Those *sharakans* which found a place in the church service are called canonical; those remaining outside of this arrangement are called apocryphal. In time these came to form part of the services but subsequently did not find a place in the *Sharaknots*.

Beginning with Mesrop Mashtots and extending down to the final writers of *sharakans* in the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries, almost all authors of canonical *sharakans* also wrote apocryphal songs.⁶ One thing is evident, that in poetic art apocryphal *sharakans* are inferior to the more refined, tight, and musical canonical *sharakans*. Editors of the *Sharaknots* probably had this and other considerations of the Church in mind when certain *sharakans* were excluded in different centuries.

The fundamental sources of Armenian spiritual chant were the Old and New Testaments as well as Armenian national literature, history, the lives of noted spiritual and lay individuals, traditions, heroic events, and so forth. The Old Testament's prophetic blessings, each having a message appropriate for a given day of the divine service, form a type of *sharakan* called "Blessing." Belonging to this type are the *sharakans* "Khorhurd metz yev skancheli" (Great and Wondrous Mystery) for Christmas, "Norahrash psakavor" (Wondrously Hallowed) for Vardanants Day, "Aisor hariav i merelots" (Today He Rose from the Dead) for Easter, among others. The *Psalms* of David served as an exemplar for the Armenian *Voghormia sharakans* as well as for the types *Ter-yerknits*, *Hambardzi*, *Mankunk*, and *Apashkharutium*. Although these *sharakans* became Armenianized in later centuries, their origins derive from blessings and psalms of the Old Testament and have been preserved to this day.

The Four Gospels of the New Testament also provided material for many prayers, sermons, and *sharakans* for the eight days of Christmas, Candlemass, Palm Sunday, Resurrection Day, Ascension, and Transfiguration Day.

The books of Agatangeghos, Koriun, Yeghishe, and Ghevond also served as sources for Armenian *sharakan* writers such as Hovhannes Mandakuni, Catholicos Komitas, Catholicos Sahak Dzoraporetsi, and many others. Another source of inspiration for spiritual chants were lives of the saints, lives and martyrdoms of patriotic and religious individuals, and lives of the apostles.

Sharakans which were widely spread and cultivated in the fifth to seventh centuries (by Sahak Partev, Mesrop Mashtots, Movses Khorenatsi, Hovhannes Mandakuni, Catholicos Komitas, Anania Shirakatsi, Sahak Dzoraporetsi, Hovhan Odznetsi, and others) experienced a decline from the second half of the eighth century until the eleventh century. From this period only the names of Stepanos Siunetsi and Petros Getadardz are known. Generally, the *kanon* which was introduced in the eighth century was not only impractical but even became an obstacle for development of *sharakans*.

During the eleventh to twelfth centuries once again religious song and music blossomed and reached the pinnacle of its development. The *sharakans* of Hovhannes Pluz, Hakob Sanahnetsi, Grigor V kayaser, Hovhannes Sarkavag, Nerses Lambronatsi, and especially Nerses

Shnorhali appeared, giving a special fullness to the Armenian spiritual chant and enriching the *Sharaknots*.

Beginning with the thirteenth century the development of *sharakans* slowed, while it completely halted beginning with the fifteenth century. There was no need felt for new church songs beyond what was already in the doxology; and, consequently, any newly created *sharakans* were denied practical application.

Thus, gradually developing, those spiritual songs, which in the initial period appeared as *tsords* attached to the psalms, came to constitute the largest branch of Armenian spiritual lyric poetry. Their development as well as their decline was connected not only with the Church and its canons but also with the demands and problems of Armenian national-cultural life, beginning in the fifth century when *sharakans* served as a stimulus for consolidation of the Armenian Church and until its decline in the fifteenth century, when, under the influence of increasing secularization, further development of the spiritual chant became superfluous.

* * *

Similar to the Armenian national religion and worship, spiritual chant bears in it traces of pagan religions as well as the influence of Iranian, Assyrian, and Greek religious music. It is hypothesized that in ancient times many laudatory songs were created to glorify deities of the Armenian pantheon. Thus, Christianity, which attempted by all means to destroy the age-old Armenian observances, nonetheless imitated the laudatory, eulogistic traditions of previous cults and their worship of light. The Bible became the cornerstone of spiritual chant because it was the general source of spiritual inspiration for all Christians. The *Psalms* of David, Solomon's *Song of Songs*, and the prophetic blessings became models for the national spiritual song of all Christian peoples, including Armenians.

It was by translating and imitating Greek and Assyrian spiritual chants that the first *sharakan* writers, Sahak Partev and Mesrop Mashtots, created the Armenian spiritual chant. In subsequent centuries, literary and musical aspects of Greek ecclesiastical songs continued to be the object of continual interest and appropriation. Also widespread in the East, including Armenia, were spiritual creations of the noted Syrian

Christian authors Bardaisan (end of the second century and beginning of the third) and Ephraem Syrus (fourth century). These had an impact on the creation of Armenian *sharakans*. Their influence is especially noteworthy in chants of repentance, particularly during the period of Nerses Shnorhali in Cilicia.⁷

The first Armenian *sharakan* writers were *MESROP MASHTOTS* and Sahak Partev (fifth century). In creating spiritual songs, Mashtots turned to forms of ancient pagan worship (such as metaphors of the sun and moon), *gusan* folklore and translated verse works, most especially the Bible, from which the many examples of Hebrew poetry that were culled had been Armenianized by Mashtots himself. At present more than one hundred *sharakans* are attributed to him, among which the most important are songs of repentance, comprising the sub-genres known as *Harts*, *Voghormia*, and *Ter yerknits*.

The Mashtotsian *Hartses*, which in the fifth century still appeared as *kitsords*, consist of three verses and a chorus and have identical diction and phraseology. These songs tell the story of the three Babylonian children taken from the prophecy of Daniel. This lengthy song relates the story of how the three youths who had refused to worship the idol of Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar were able to survive the flames of the fiery furnace. It consists of forty-two songs of six verses, each in turn divided into two sections. The first three verses are called *Harts*, wherein the poet expresses his theme; in the remaining three verses, called *Gortzk*, the Lord is glorified.

The children sang in the furnace, saying:

“Lord God of our fathers,
Blessed art Thou, forever.

Do not betray us for our impiety,
For the sake of Your beloved, Abraham,
Blessed art Thou, forever.”

An angel descended from Heaven
And extinguished the flames of the furnace,
And saved them from the hands of death.
Blessed art Thou, forever.

Bless the Lord, Hallelujah,
And hold Him high, forever.

Four-headed beasts glorify Him on high:
“Glory to You, Father, Hallelujah.”
And hold Him high, forever.

The six-winged seraphim exclaim:
“Holy, holy, holy, Lord, Hallelujah.”
And hold Him high, forever.⁸

Sharakans known as *Ter yerknits*, composed of three or four stanzas, generally express glorification and virtually manifest the same formulary construct as the type *Orhnetsek zTer* (Bless the Lord) and *Bardzr ararek zna havitian* (Hold Him High, Forever). Here, frequently, glorification and benediction give way to expressions of regret, lament, and repentance.

The strongest emotions of distancing themselves from worldly passions and seeking forgiveness are displayed in Mashtotsian *Voghormias* (Mercies). In them, the author freely expresses his personal feelings with entreaty and supplication and reveals his inner spiritual experiences. Although the spirit of repentance and regret are lifted from the *Psalms*, nonetheless, the Mashtotsian *sharakans* are original and unique.

I fall down before you
And seek forgiveness
For my transgressions.
Father, ignore not my entreaties.
I cry out like a publican
And shed my tears before you
Like a prostitute.
Father, ignore not my entreaties.
I was defeated by an unseen enemy
And wounded by the secret arrows
From the slanderer.
Father, ignore not my entreaties.⁹

Voghormias are the crown of Mashtots's *sharakans*, since they were written with powerful feeling and lyricism. He, like a wayward sheep terrified by the idea of the Last Judgement, beseeches compassionate God to open the doors of His mercy and forgive his many sins which are "more heavy than sands of the sea." This beseeching approach of self-blame and self-effacement was continued after Mashtots by later *sharakan*-writers. The greatest such Armenian figure in the Middle Ages, Narekatsi, was so powerfully influenced by it that it prompted his writing of *Matian voghbergutian* (Book of Lamentations).

Mashtots was the first to create the three aforementioned types of *sharakans* (*Harts*, *Voghormia*, and *Ter yerknits*) corresponding to the three canons of psalmody. The *Voghormias* he wrote, with their sharp feeling of lament, spread and later became matchless examples of lyricism, creations expressing the turbulence of man's spiritual world. This was further effected by the *sharakan*'s gradual nationalization, expressions, and changes of choruses, giving a greater place to individual free emotion.

In content and poetic mastery, Mashtots's *sharakans* are polished songs. These are the first original examples of Armenian metrical poetry which display refined lyrical tendencies and represent harmonious poetic rhythm through their regularity. The first Armenian *sharakans* were free verse with certain metrical elements. The Mashtotsian *sharakans* consist of three verses, stanzas with equal numbers of lines (two or three, four or five), with rhyme and refrains. Sometimes the refrain appears as the verse's final line, sometimes the first, and sometimes both.

Most merciful Father, I confess to You like the prodigal
son,
Forgive my sins, *and have mercy.*

Lord, You pitied the Canaanite woman.
Have pity on sinful me; *and have mercy.*

Lord, You turned the publican to knowledge of the truth.
Do this to me, too, the one who strayed; *and have mercy.*¹⁰

Or:

Help me in my need, Lord,
As You once helped Jonah, *and have mercy.*

Cleanse me of my transgressions, Lord,
As You once cleansed the publican, *and have mercy.*

Preserve me from treacherous lips, Lord,
And give me life with Your blood, *and have mercy.*¹¹

It is believed that Armenians inherited the technique of poetic repetitions from ancient temple and *gusan* songs, also used in rhythmic prayers. Mashtots's chants, which he himself styled "canticles/hymns" (*orhnergutium*), were sung at one time. Thus they possess musical rhythm, light meter, internal lull, stress, and rhyme. Certain of his poems consist of lines in ten or twelve syllables, with two or three feet.¹²

I neghutián imúm/ ognia indz, tér
[Help me in my need, Lord]

Noteworthy, too, is the type of *Voghormia* having pentasyllabic or heptasyllabic structure, adopted and used by subsequent writers (Grigor Narekatsi in the tenth century, Nerses Shnorhali in the twelfth century) as well as the completely metrical, a type with iambic-anapest feet. One perfect example is the *Voghormia* entitled "Alik hantsanats" (Waves of Transgression):

Waves of transgression batter me;
And my many sins face me.

Now what shall I do with my sinful self,
So I will not live in the awful fire?

I have sinned against You, Christ, Son of God,
Grant forgiveness for my transgressions.¹³

From a literary standpoint, Mashtots's *sharakans* are simple and frank. There are no deep emotional outbursts, flights of logic or grand

imagination. They are songs in unadorned language without descriptive imagery, with mild and peaceful moods, which were accessible to all. That is the reason they have found a place in numerous manuscripts (in *Zhamagirks*, *Sharaknotses* and *Mashtotses*).

SAHAK PARTEV's *sharakans* are songs from the Gospel, with the purpose of teaching the New Testament. More than two dozen in number, they were composed for the ceremonies of Maundy Thursday, when the service for Christ's death is observed, from the Washing of the Feet to Burial: "Aisor kangnetsav" (Today He Rose), "Artzatsirutiamb" (In Greed), "I gisherin horum" (On That Night), "Ov skancheli" (O Wondrous). For Friday and Saturday, for the feast of Palm Sunday, his *sharakans* depict Christ's entry into Jerusalem: "Zgalust ko Kristos aisor" (Christ, Your Advent Today), "Tagavor golov" (King Everlasting), "Horzham yekn Hisus" (When Jesus Appeared), "I harutian avuri" (On the Day of Resurrection), "Urakh ler mair luso" (Rejoice, Mother of Light), etc., when Jerusalem and all nature rejoiced on Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives. *Sharakans* relating to the resurrection of Lazarus form part of the canon of Holy Week (these include *Orhnutiun*, *Ter yerknits*, *Voghormia*, *Chashu* and *Tun tnorenutian*) which, together with *sharakans* of Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday, depict the betrayal and death of Christ in simple narrative pictures, sometimes with the expressions of inner feelings (especially in the scenes of crucifixion). Sahak Partev utilized both allegory and juxtaposition to create an impressive effect.

MOVSES KHORENATSI, the noted fifth-century Armenian historian, was also an outstanding *sharakan* writer. He authored numerous spiritual songs relating to Christmas (forty-four of them), among which most noteworthy are the types known as *Avetiats*, the Christmas "*kanon*," and especially the *Metzatsustse*: "Urakhatsir srбуhi" (Rejoice, O Saint), "Aisor bann i Hore" (Today the Word of God), "Aneghaneli bnutiun" (Eternal Being), "Luis i luso" (Light of Lights), "Urakh ler Mariam, surb Astvatzatzin" (Rejoice Mary, Holy Mother of God), and others.

Among Khorenatsi's well-known *sharakans* is "Khorhurd metz yev skancheli" (Great and Wondrous Mystery) which, by its simplicity, won great popularity and was also sung outside the church. Khorenatsi

glorifies the birth of Christ and tells the whole world to rejoice at the advent of God made man:

Great and wondrous mystery,
Revealed today,
Shepherds singing with the angels,
Give good tidings to the world.

The new king is born
In the city of Bethlehem,
Sons of man, bless Him,
Since for us He assumed flesh.

He who heaven and earth could not contain
Is now wrapped in swaddling clothes,
Without leaving the Father,
He dwells in the holy cave.¹⁴

In *sharakans* of the Christmas season, which usually glorify the baby Christ, Khorenatsi views Him as a source of light, hope, and salvation and annoints Jesus and His radiant mother Mary with the leitmotif ("Aisor bann i hore" [Today the Word of God]):

Light of light dawned from the Father,
And illuminated the universe,
Incorruptible birth of shadowless light,
Which the ranks of spirits forever glorify.¹⁵

The image of the Mother of God created by Khorenatsi's pen is of a woman endowed with truly divine rays and qualities, an "incorruptible temple" and a "pillar of light."

Mother of light and dwelling place of the living word,
All peoples and all nations bless You.
Mother of the Creator, and renovator of the past,
Light dawned from You unto us, seated in darkness.¹⁶

Khorenatsi's *sharakans* of the *Metzatsustse* genre glorify the worship of sun, light, and nature, recalling pagan songs that venerated the sun. Such are many of the songs dedicated to the Mother of God and Christ, which are filled with light and beautiful similes drawn from nature.

Pillar of light and canopy, blessed Virgin,
Who sprinkled us with heavenly dew,
We glorify You, divine Virgin.

Burning bush and seraph of clay, blessed Virgin,
Since the fruit of life was given to us by You,
We glorify You, divine Virgin.

Nullifier of curses, atoner of sins, blessed Virgin,
Who embraced the unbearable,
We glorify You, divine Virgin.¹⁷

Khorenatsi also authored *sharakans* relating to the feasts of Candlemass and Assumption. Their topic is drawn from the New Testament and they are written in a clear, accessible style with frequent repetitions and without emotionalism.

One of Mashtots's students, *HOVHANNES MANDAKUNI* (420-491), during the years of his pontifical activities, in addition to dealing with questions of doxology, also produced seventeen *sharakans* for the feasts of Transfiguration, Translators, and the Hripsimants: "Vor i lerinn ailakerpial" (Who Was Transfigured on the Mount), "Zanchareli khorhurd" (Mystery Unbound), "Zanchareli luis" (Light Unbound), "I Tabor lerinn" (On Mount Tabor), "Kristos Astvatz mer" (Christ Our Lord), "Tsntzatsek aisor" (Rejoice Today), "Skanchelagortz Astvatz" (Miraculous Lord), etc. In five *sharakans* dedicated to the Translators, Mandakuni praised the dedication and idealism of these men who scorned worldly life and sought refuge in spiritual glory. For the spiritual needs of the people they translated an enormous body of literature and the Bible and immortalized their names. Among them, *sharakans* dedicated to Mesrop Mashtots hold a special place ("Anchareli shnorhok Itsial" [Filled with Amazing Grace], "Nmanial

Movsesi" [Like Unto Moses]) wherein his life is regarded as a martyrdom for Armenian culture. Mandakuni regarded the generation of Translators as the most important phenomenon in the national life of Armenians, after St. Gregory the Illuminator himself.

This legacy, created in the Golden Age, was expanded upon in subsequent centuries by spiritual chanters.

The seventh-century Catholicos *KOMITAS* (Komitas I Aghtsetsi Shinogh, "the Builder," d. 628), who is remembered as a vigorous participant in doctrinal disputes, became immortalized in the pages of Armenian church history and literature for his *sharakan* "Andzink nvirialk" (Devoted Souls), written on the occasion of construction of the church of St. Hripsime.¹⁸ Among Armenian spiritual chants, it holds a unique place for its lofty poetic art and melody.

The topic of this *sharakan* is drawn from Agatangeghos and relates the sublimity and beauty of Christian soul, incarnate in the persons of Hripsime and the other virgins. This becomes the fundamental concept, to which they become victim, for the triumph of Christianity. Of course, the main concern is glorification of the new doctrine and sacrifice of the physical to the spiritual, for the sake of gaining eternal life. This idea which is the cornerstone of Christian teaching is reflected repeatedly in church literature and *sharakans*. But what is attractive in "Devoted Souls" is not the idea but the content and form of its realization. In contradistinction to preceding attempts, the subject matter here is not the Virgin Mary or drawn from the Bible. It is a tradition connected with Armenian life and history. This matter was close to Komitas since it tied with the history of the conversion of the Armenians. The sacrifice of the Hripsimian virgins had a special significance and immediacy for him. They brought a radiant faith, a contrary philosophy directed against "demoniacal vices" of pagan centuries. The virgins were endowed with great physical beauty which, however, was considered secondary to lofty, virtuous, spiritual beauty. Denial of self and of the world, which opened a broad, radiant path before Hripsime and her companions, was for Komitas the greatest precondition necessary for humanity to reach the luminous Heavenly path.

All souls long to resemble you,
United in the holiness and love of Christ,
For through your death you opened our way

For all people to ascend to God.

Leaders, learned in spiritual wisdom,
With light bodies and soaring minds,
Through the long course of storm-tossed life
You sailed unharmed and reached Christ.

True offshoot of the vine of Christ,
Clusters of grape pressed by the Heavenly cultivator,
Winnowed in your granaries through mortification,
So that you would be happy with the cup of immortality.

They rejected the needs of physical life,
For they knew it is a dream and false illusion,
They did not relax in the embrace of luxury,
They knew that transitory greatness is false.¹⁹

It is, of course, the author's high poetic artistry which gives animus and breadth to the above thoughts and ideas and turns the reader into a communicant. This is actually more of a lyric poem with epic overtones, full of similes, metaphorical expressions, and juxtapositions which the author has executed with taste and deep feeling.

This poem is quite long, consisting of thirty-six stanzas, a feature which violates the *sharakan*'s accepted form of three or four verses. It is written in acrostic format and in accordance with the conventions of ancient versification (i.e., the line consists of four feet in three syllables). The *sharakans* of Sahak Partev, Mesrop Mashtots, Movses Khorenatsi, and Hovhannes Mandakuni, written in the preceding hundred years, had already created impressive, musical examples of this genre, imbuing spiritual songs with marvelous imagery and warmth. Based on their aesthetics, "Devoted Souls" appeared, which was not dependent on past literary conventions, and bears the stamp of its century's thinking and taste. Many spiritual chants were written after the pattern of Komitas' *sharakan* (glorifying the Mother of God instead of Hripsime)—following his artistic principles, especially his method of beginning each verse with the next letter of the alphabet, called acrostic format (*tzairakap*). Such poems often are styled *Andzink* in Armenian, after "Andzink nvirialk." Davtak Kertogh's "Voghb" (Lamentation), Nerses

Shnorhali's "Aisor anchar" (This Day Unbound) and "Aravot luso" (Dawn of Light), Grigor Skevratsi's "Aregakann ardarutian" (Sun of Righteousness), Kirakos Yerznkatsi's "Arevelk gerarpin" (The East Rejoices) marvelous poems, and others like them were influenced by Komitas's famous *sharakan*.

The seventh through ninth centuries represent the second stage in the development of the *sharakan*. The spread of translations of Greek literature and art, the expansion and strengthening of national-cultural centers (churches and schools), the achievements of branches of art and literature such as historiography, architecture, and music, in this period, also developed and elevated the quality of the *sharakan*. Marvelous church structures came on the scene, whose construction developed painting and church music and also served as a stimulus for spiritual chants. The simple style and contents of the *sharakan* changed. They departed from psalmody and acquired a more complex nature as a result of problems facing the Armenian Church which was gradually becoming more national.

There is also another circumstance which played a very important role in the history and culture of these centuries. The doctrinal disputations which started after the Council of Chalcedon (fifth century) did not subside in subsequent centuries. The Church Council of Dvin (506) adopted an anti-Chalcedonian position, which was followed by the appearance of numerous doctrinal encyclicals and sermons. On the other hand, sectarian movements became the cause of new Church assemblies and decrees.

The spiritual song, connected as it was with Armenian culture and reality and being an important element of church service, could not avoid reflecting national and religious concerns. This is the reason many *sharakans* were written concerning doctrinal topics by such authors as Hovhan Odznetsi, Stepanos Siunetsi, Sahak Dzoraporetsi, and Petros Getadardz.

Sharakans, which in the preceding period were written in free form, now became measured, utilizing the acrostic form either in alphabetic order or with the letters of a person's name. Noteworthy national figures or the holy Fathers became material for the spiritual chant. These themes brought along with them national motifs such as love of one's homeland, which in subsequent centuries became the nucleus of patriotic lyric poetry—for *sharakans* express not only religious fervor

dedicated to Christ, the Mother of God, the Holy Spirit, and individual saints but also feelings of love, dedication and sacrifice for one's homeland and people. Among this genre are such *sharakans* as "Vardanants," "Atomiants," "Ghevondiants," "Kanon Srbuin Grigori Lusavorchi," and "Vahan Goghtnatsi."

The subject of *sharakans* in the fifth to eighth centuries, as was examined above, consisted of blessings, glorifications, repentance, and repudiation of worldly life. They found expression in the eight types of *sharakans*. Time brought novel themes leading to new understanding and the development of artistic forms. Each age imparted its ideas and feelings to the spiritual chant, related to the realities of Armenian life.

From this perspective, Catholicos *SAHAK DZORAPORETSI* (677-708) brought something new to the *sharakan*, writing songs devoted to the Cross and the Church. For this reason he is called "Khachi yergich" (Singer of the Cross). The liberation of the Cross of Christ from the Persians and its transferral to Jerusalem aroused attention toward the Church and the Cross, around which religious songs and histories were woven. In the Armenian Apostolic Church the Cross is a powerful force, and in Dzoraporetsi's *sharakans* it is considered the "Wood of Life." The Cross is regarded as a symbol of salvation, on which the Lord was nailed and gave up His soul—it became the source of a new and deathless life, becoming a "Tree of Life."

Dzoraporetsi's *sharakans* are contained in five *kanons* of the *Sharaknots*, where glorification and benediction of the Holy Cross is expressed metaphorically and rhetorically: "Veratsman srbo khachin" (Exaltation of the Holy Cross), "Anapakan surb zkhachn" (The Incorruptible Holy Cross), "Giut khachin" (Discovery of the Cross), "Ej Miatzin i hore" (The Only-Begotten Came Down From the Father), etc. Revealed here are the Cross's redeeming purport, its universal power, attraction, the glow and rays it received from the East; and, it is styled the "Invincible Sign." Also noteworthy are his songs relating to the Church in which the author glorifies the Armenian Church and considers it a "daughter of Zion."

Dzoraporetsi's most widespread and popular *sharakan* is the song "Ej Miatzin i hore" (The Only-Begotten Came Down From the Father), where Ejmiatzin is viewed as a luminous beacon for Armenia:

The Only-Begotten came down from the Father,
The light of glory with Him,
While noises were heard in Hell.
Seeing the great light,
The patriarch Gregory
Joyfully described it
To the believer king.
Come, let's build
An holy altar of light,
For through it light dawned upon us
In the land of Armenia.²⁰

In the seventh century some *sharakans* were written about the Prophets and Apostles, attributed to *ANANIA SHIRAKATSI*.

In the eighth century, Catholicos *HOVHAN ODZNETSI*, known as "the philosopher" (d. 728), wrote many *sharakans* glorifying the Prophets and Apostles, such as those dedicated to David, James, Stephen, Peter, and Paul. Odznetsi calls David the "Father of God" and the Apostle James "Brother of the Lord." For Odznetsi the martyrdom of Stephen was a guarantee that he was worthy of the kingdom of Heaven, and the author describes it with wonderment and awe. Even while being stoned, Stephen beseeched God to forgive those stoning him. In this way, Stephen earned the title of "first martyr for Christ." In this song as well as in Odznetsi's *sharakans* to the Apostles Paul, Peter, James, and John, one finds some delicate, lyrical lines; nonetheless, their occasional presence is not sufficient to create a poetic mood.

STEPANOS SIUNETSI (d. 735) was the most gifted of eighth-century *sharakan* writers. He received an excellent spiritual education at the famous seminary of Siunik, traveled to Constantinople, Athens, and Rome to study Greek and Latin, completed numerous translations, and wrote spiritual chants. He was the first to introduce *kanon* into the divine liturgy. Philology has established that he was the author of the *sharakans* "Avag orhnutiants" (Major Blessings) and "Martirosats" (Martyrs).

His "Blessings" have a rather lengthy and complex structure. Each consists of ten parts, each in turn composed of three quartrains

with their own melody. Each part has its own name. Siunetsi's hymns were performed at the morning service and substituted for the psalms sung until then. They glorify God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Cross, and the Mother of God, using epic and national motifs. His *sharakans* of the Martyrs' *kanon* number more than ninety (including the genres called *Orhnutiun*, *Harts*, *Mankunk*, *Chashu*, *Hambardzi*, *Ter yerknits*, *Voghormia*, and *Metzatsustse*). The *Orhnutiun* is a glorification of the Lord which Martyrs perform, lighting the world with the light of Christianity and often being martyred for it. The *Hartses* both glorify and entreat. The other *sharakans*, again, eulogize the Martyrs.

In the history of *sharakans*, Stepanos Siunetsi's significance was that he brought order to, and arranged, the voices, tunes, and music of spiritual songs, and Armenian divine service.

Siunetsi's sister, *SAHAKDUKHT* (birth and death dates uncertain), was the first woman poet in Armenian literature; an educated and gifted woman, who in her youth left the capital Dvin where she had lived and studied, she went to the mountainous region of Garni and became an ascetic. She wrote spiritual chants, *ketsords*, and *sharakans*, and composed music which she taught the children of Garni, seated behind a curtain. Reaching us from Sahakdukht is a poem with nine quatrains entitled "Srbuhi Mariam" (Saint Mary), addressed to the Lord's Mother. The first letter of each of the nine quatrains taken together, spell the name Sahakdukht. The poem resembles the *Metzatsustse* spiritual chants and is full of elated and glowing pictures of nature. The similes, metaphors, and language used by Sahakdukht in glorifying the Lord's Mother ("incorruptible temple," "ray of divine light," "mediator of peace," "tree of life," "flower of light") have entered our literature and have been frequently used in various types of spiritual chants.

Some philologists (Ghevond Alishan, Maghakia Ormanian, Grigor Hakobian) believe that Sahakdukht also wrote the beautiful *sharakan* dedicated to Vahan Goghtnatsi, "Zarmanali e indz ..." (It is Amazing to Me ...), which had been attributed to Vahan's sister, Khosrovidukht. The *Sharaknots* contains the songs of neither Sahakdukht nor Khosrovidukht. They remained outside the divine service, not even finding a place in "apocryphal" works.

* * *

In the tenth century, Grigor Narekatsi had a powerful influence on Armenian spiritual poetry. His verses have a close correlation with *sharakans*; with their spirit, style, contents, and poetic art. The difference is that Narekatsi's verses besides the spiritual also contain lay style, sensibility, and folk setting. His mystical reflections are outweighed by the exuberance and joy of the layman, and by simple and natural pictures of life. Although the general content of his poetry is spiritual and written in connection with canons of church festivals, it is nonetheless of a different quality and does not find a place in the Church's divine service.²¹

Sharakan writers are not known from the ninth to tenth centuries; but, with the eleventh century began the third and final stage in the development of the *sharakan*, one which lasted until the fifteenth century. After the twelfth century, further development of the *sharakan* gradually declined, finally ceasing in the fifteenth century.

The best known *sharakan* writer of the eleventh century was PETROS GETADARDZ (d. 1058) from Sebastia, who authored *Nnjetselots* (For the Departed) and *Mankunk* (Infants) *sharakans*. Getadardz also dedicated *sharakans* to the virgin Sandukht ("Sharakan srbuhvuin Sandkhto" [*Sharakan* to Saint Sandukht]), to the martyred Kirakos ("Harmato bariats kaghtsr sharavigh" [A Sweet Branch From Good Roots]), to Davit Dvnetzi ("Ltsial astvatzayin shnorhin" [Full of Divine Grace]), and the Voskiants and Atovmiant martyrs.

Among Getadardz's *sharakans*, the *Nnjetselots* group is rated especially highly for their emotionality and artistic worth. They are the author's perceptions of the Last Judgement, which sharpened his imagination and provided imagery:

God without beginning, beginning of Creation,
 You created the first man from earth,
 To work and keep throughout his life.
 Yet because of disobedience to Your command
 A sentence of death was put upon him:
 "From dust you came; to dust you shall return."
 And now we beseech You, Creator of all,

To accept and give rest to the departed souls
 On the seven-sided radiant altars,
 Where the saints are gathered in peace
 With the meek souls of divine goodness.
 Being gold, I became valueless.
 The glorious structure has crumbled.
 Being wise, I became foolish,
 Drowning in the waves of sin. ... ²²

The motifs of repentance which are stressed in Getadardz's *sharakans* have a similarity to Mashtots's *Voghormias*. Nonetheless, the spiritual trials and feelings are different between the two. Mashtots's experience is individual and deeper, while Getadardz, having accepted pan-humanism and a pan-Christian faith, has a calm and serene attitude in his entreaties to God. It is as though he is convinced of his soul's salvation, so that without inner torments and tortures he praises the Creator.

In the twelfth century, Catholicos *GRIGOR PAHLAVUNI* (c. 1093-1166), Nerses Shnorhali's brother, also called "the younger Vkeyaser" (Martyrophile), was a distinguished *sharakan* writer. He wrote principally doctrinal and exegetical *sharakans* related to the feast of Annunciation. Noteworthy among them are "Khorhurdn anchar" (Mystery Unbound) and *sharakans* dedicated to Palm Sunday.

HOVHANNES IMASTASER (Sarkavag) lived in the eleventh-twelfth centuries in Eastern Armenia and is known not only for his literary and scholarly reputation but also for his *sharakans* dedicated to the Ghevondiants and Hripsimiants martyrs.

By Imastaser's time, the austere mysticism of Narekatsi's period had already passed. The breath of secularization as well as new national and social conceptions revealed in Imastaser's *sharakans* tempered the excessive religiosity of the day and expanded the horizons of faith and the Church.

The *sharakan* "Anskizbn Bann Astvatz" (God the Word With No Beginning), written in memory of the Hripsimiants, resembles Komitas's "Andzink nvirialk." This poem of Imastaser's is composed of

thirty-six verses. Despite similarities in subject, style, and form, it yields to the former although written with genuine feeling.

Also attributed to Imastaser is a lengthy poem dedicated to the Ghevondiants martyrs entitled "Paitzaratsir" (Brighten),²³ as well as the *sharakans* "Anchareli Band Astvatz" (God the Word Unbound) and "Paitzaratsan aisor" (Brightened On This Day) which touch upon the ideas of salvation of the people and Church and immortalize the memory of heroes of the faith. Although the Ghevondians were martyred by shedding their "venerable" blood, they enjoyed spiritual victory because they held national and divine commitments higher.

With the bloodshed of Your blessed shepherds
Gather the scattered children of Your Church,
O joy to the grief-stricken
And grantor of gifts of our salvation
Through overflowing tears.²⁴

The patriotic tendencies which were new in the Armenian spiritual chant became a model of patriotic songs for Nerses Shnorhali, Nerses Lambronatsi, Hovhannes Yerznkatsi, and many others.

Among Armenian *sharakan* writers the role of vardapet *KHACHATUR TARONATSI* (birth and death dates uncertain) is special, since he was not only the author of *sharakans* but also a musician. Coming from the western districts, he spread spiritual chants and music written in the *khaz* notation throughout Eastern Armenia. Among his songs, the best known is the *sharakan* "Khorhurd khorin" (Mystery Profound), which is one of the most beautiful songs of the mass. Written in acrostic, the first letters of each quatrain of the *sharakan*, taken together, spell out his name. This *sharakan* is also called a "vesting" *sharakan*, since it is sung at the beginning of the mass when the priest is donning his vestments, each being significant in spiritual-ecclesiastic meaning:

Mystery profound,
Inscrutable, without beginning,
Who has adorned
Your Heavenly Kingdom

With a veil
Of inaccessible light,
And has adorned the hosts of angels
With resplendent glory.

With ineffable power
You created Adam
In your Lordly image,
And with majestic glory
You clothed him
In the Garden of Eden,
The abode of felicities.

Through the passion of
Your Only-Begotten Son
All creatures were renewed
And man was made immortal again
Adorned in inviolate raiment.²⁵

In the twelfth century, *NERSES SHNORHALI* brought his consummate poetic skill in *sharakan*-writing. His high-quality *sharakans* elevated the Armenian spiritual chant to the pinnacle of its development. Shnorhali wrote more than one hundred *sharakans* and is regarded as the most prolific author in the *Sharaknots*.²⁶ He brought the *sharakan* to poetic perfection, organized the liturgy and prayers, expanded the *Tonatsuits*,²⁷ and improved parts of the service by substituting his own spiritual chants for psalms. At the same time, Shnorhali was a talented composer who sang his own songs.

Shnorhali wrote a variety of *sharakans*, divided into *Terunakan* (dominical), martyrological, doctrinal, national-patriotic, secular, and other types. Belonging to the *Terunakan* type are *sharakans* for Transfiguration, Pentecost, and Palm Sunday. A large place is occupied by the Lenten *sharakans* (known as *Aghuhatsits*), among which the *Metzatsustses* are noteworthy. These are performed on Sundays during the forty days of Lent and are composed of differing measures. In this group belong *sharakans* which, despite their repentance content, bear pictures of nature and recall Narekatsi's Christmas verses. Among these, the *Metzatsustse* for the last Sunday of Lent is regarded as the best

Orhnutium, with the title “Vor zkhordurd ko galstian” (The Mystery of Your Advent). It describes when the Savior has come to judge the world with frightful threats; near Him the Lord’s Mother reclines and serves as the last intercessor between heaven and earth. The *sharakans* dedicated to the six Sundays of Lent are songs imbued with deep understanding of Christian doctrine, which, beginning with Adam’s life in paradise and the destruction of that bliss, turn to repentance and remorse.

Utilized in these *sharakans* are parables from the Bible such as the prodigal son, the lost sheep, the unjust judge, and the widow where Shnorhali sees man’s salvation only in the return to and closeness to God. The inveteracy of sin and its condemnation by Christ brings grace for eternal salvation. Shnorhali glorifies with great praise that renewed strength, grace, which characterizes the human nature of the Son of God.

Noteworthy from an artistic standpoint is the *sharakan* dedicated to the Holy Week, “Aisor anchar” (This Day Unbound), sung on the evening of Good Friday. This is viewed as an epic poem wherein Shnorhali, with a craftsman’s poetic pen, describes the scene of the Last Supper, the Washing of Feet, the details of Holy Communion, and subsequent events, Judas’ betrayal and Christ’s crucifixion. Shnorhali depicts these Gospel events with a believer’s deep feelings—the true grasp of the human and divine, pitting them against each other, thus personally reliving the mysteries from the Upper Room to Golgotha. Despite the fact that the material is well known, Shnorhali paints it with a strength of imagination that vividly recreates the action and emotion.

The salvation of humanity which was realized by the passion of God’s Only-Begotten Son, the brutally crucified Christ, is the *sharakan*’s principal theme. He atones for Adam’s sin, opening the gates of paradise for the new Adam. It is the mystic ideology of Man’s approach to God that guides Shnorhali’s doctrinal and didactic tendencies with which he embellishes almost all of his works. Shnorhali’s poem is harmonious in its parts, emotional, and woven around one general idea.

“Aisor anchar” was written for ritual purposes. It is composed of thirty-six octets with lines of seven to eight feet.

Shnorhali’s *sharakan* “Norogogh tiezerats” (Renewer of the Universe), written with even stronger spiritual feelings, is held together by mystic symbolism and from the standpoint of influence is similar to the above-mentioned poem.

Among Shnorhali's spiritual chants, *sharakans* called *yerg* (song) have a distinct place. These are the poem "Vetsoria ararchutian" (The Six Days of Creation), "Norasteghtzial" (Newly-Created), "Ararich yev mardaser" (Creator and Man-Loving One), "Nayiats sirov" (He Gazed Tenderly), "I ken haitsemk" (We Beseech Thee), "Aravot luso" (Dawn of Light), and "Ashkharh amenain" (The Entire World).

The *yerg* is a special type in Armenian spiritual poetry, characterized by strictly ordered expressions which approach classical simplicity and are formed of pentasyllabic or octostyllabic lines, possessing a robust meter and musicality. These were the most widespread of Shnorhali's songs in the past as they are now, because they contain meter as well as an accessible poetic character and musical balance, drawn from medieval lay folk elements.

The well known poem "Ararchakan" (Creator) which together with "Norasteghtzial" forms one complete work recounts the story of Creation in the Bible and is divided into the days of the week, with each day receiving its appropriate *yerg* :

The command of the Creator's word,
On the second day of the beginning,
Separated waters from waters
Thus establishing firm ground ...

... The many-eyed assembly of cherubim,
The Trisagion of the seraphim,
The throne of uncreated Godhood,
Consubstantial with the Trinity ... ²⁸

"Norasteghtzial" is one of Shnorhali's best lyric songs; the first letters of each verse spell out the name "Nerses." It appears as a prelude to "Ararchakan" and narrates the first day of Creation when Heaven and Earth were formed. This legend, set forth in a clear, artistic language, with a mild musical meter and style, without superfluous and tiresome repetitions, achieves a delicate harmony of thought and emotion. The Creation legend itself with its picturesque episodes communicates an epic flavor to the poem. The interpretations of the seven-day Creation, of light, of divine strength and power, with scenes taken from the old and New Testaments, reveal Shnorhali's broad intellect and his abilities

as a learned theologian. Especially homophonic are descriptions of the creation of celestial bodies—the sun, moon, and stars:

The darkness, from nothing, and primordial,
Was dispelled on the first day;
On the fourth day that clear light
Gathered matter for the sun,
Created the moon like light,
And fashioned the chorus of stars.²⁹

“Aravot luso” (Dawn of Light) and “Ashkharh amenain” (The Entire World) are Shnorhali’s best known and popular *sharakans*, accessible to every Armenian and sung on diverse occasions. “Aravot luso” is a highly artistic creation, performed in spiritual and lay circles, as a song of joy and sorrow. According to Nikoghos Tahmizian, a well-known specialist in Armenian medieval music, it is a rousing composition, sublime yet simple and “is noteworthy for its clever use of elements of versification, meter, and rhyme taken directly from popular folk poetry, as well as for its classical simplicity of structure.”³⁰ Shnorhali created here a phonic effect where the first letter of the lines of each triplet is the same letter of the Armenian alphabet, in proper order:

Dawn of light,
Sun of justice,
Kindle light within me.

Procession from the Father,
Spring forth from my soul
The Word to please You.

You treasure of mercy,
Let me be the finder
Of Your hidden treasure.

Open the door of mercy
To me, the confessor,
And place me with those up high.

Triple unity,
Tender of the living,
Have mercy on me.

Accept me, Forgiver,
Accept me, Merciful One,
Accept me, Compassionate.

King of Glory,
Grantor of forgiveness,
Forgive my transgressions.

Assembler of the good,
Take me, too, unto
The assembly of the first-born.

I beseech You, Lord,
To You, Compassionate,
Give healing to me.

Be life to me, since I'm dead,
Light to me, since I'm in the dark,
Dispeller of my pains.

Arise, Lord, to help
Awaken me, since I'm numb,
To resemble the joyous.

Father with no beginning,
Consubstantial Son,
And ever the Holy Spirit.

Knower of mysteries,
Grant me in my darkness
Luminous thoughts.

Born from the bosom of the Father,

Arise the light of glory
In me, concealed in shadows.³¹

In its poetic structure, "Aravot luso" resembles "Ashkharh amenain," where Shnorhali does not implore divine grace and forgiveness from the Creator but represents himself as hopelessly lost, a guilty individual who, in the spirit of Narekatsi, mercilessly lambasts himself. Of course, this *sharakan* lacks the literary perfection found in the former but does possess an agreeable and accessible style, for which it has spread and gained recognition outside the church.

It is evident that the secular psyche permeated even the spiritual chant in the twelfth century; and many phenomena of real life are reflected in the pages of these verses. As a consequence of this process, Shnorhali transforms national-folk heroes into the substance of poetry, enriching Armenian lyric poetry with lay themes. These are simple, inspired writings which already have distanced themselves from the *sharakan*'s limits and ceased being merely church songs. Such are Shnorhali's *sharakans* dedicated to fortress-guards ("Hishestsuk" [Let Us Remember]; "Zartik park im" [Arise My Glory]), to King Trdat ("Vor geraguin" [Supreme]; "Vor imanali" [Knowable]) and, to the heroes of the Vardanants war ("Norahrash psakavor" [Wondrously Hallowed], "Ariatsialk" [The Brave Ones]) which were sung as heroic encomiums not only in churches on Vardanants Day but also at military reviews, assemblies, and performances.

The wondrously hallowed is Vardan Mamikonian himself, the soldier devoted to the national spirit and Christian faith who, together with his courageous comrades-in-arms, went to be martyred in the battle of Avarair, becoming an unprecedented example of heroic inspiration for the ages.

Wondrously hallowed, and commander of the virtuous,
You bravely bore spiritual arms against death,
Vardan, brave martyr, who repelled the enemy,
You crowned the Church with your red blood.

The arms of the heavenly King triumphed in battle,
With prudent wisdom ineffably made wise,
Sunlit confidant renowned in good name,

As witness to the Crucified One,
You were crowned by shedding your blood.³²

Also noteworthy are the chants dedicated to the martyrdom of the Ghevondiants, in which the patriotic Ghevondians resist the Persian King Yazkert and are martyred for Christianity. Shnorhali also devoted chants to numerous saints, apostles, and prophets, including Gregory the Illuminator, King Trdat, Sahak Partev, and heroes of the Vardanants.

Notable among Shnorhali's spiritual chants are the *Arevagal* (Sunrise) *sharakans*, which glorify the Lord's Mother, the sun, and light.

Worship of light, deeply rooted in Eastern cultures, goes back to the period of ancient Armenian paganism which, in its turn, was influenced by Persian Zoroastrian rituals and services.³³

Such light-worshipping motifs during the Christian period penetrated the Armenian spiritual chant and were directed at the Lord's Mother and God. If certain Persian Zend-Avesta hymns are comparable to the chants of Shnorhali and other Armenian spiritual chants, it is clear that the light and sun motifs of the latter in no way are inferior to the former. These Armenian chants continued to exist in ancient and medieval periods, offering impressive examples of hymns glorifying light.

Light, Creator of light, first light,
Dweller in unapproachable light, Heavenly Father,
Blessed of the celestial hosts,
At the dawning of the morning light
Let your perceptible light dawn in our souls.

Light, born of light, Sun of Justice,
Ineffable Son born of the Father,
Before the sun praised Your name to the Father,
At the dawning of morning light
Let your perceptible light dawn in our souls.

Light emanating from the Father, fount of goodness,
The blessed spirit of God,
Children of the Church, with the angels
Glorify You.

At the dawning of morning light
Let your perceptible light dawn in our souls.³⁴

“Light of the sun,” “dawn of light,” “light of knowledge,” “perceptible light,” “diamond East,” “temple of light,” “mother of light,” and “luminous pearl” are some of the many appellations used by Shnorhali in his *Metzastsustses* to describe the Lord’s Mother.

Light is also glorified in Shnorhali’s evening *sharakans* “I ken haitsemk” (We Beseech Thee); “Nayiats sirov” (He Gazed Tenderly). To dispel the darkness and evil of night the author appeals to God to watch over the soul and body of sleeping, benumbed man, illuminating his mind with His wisdom.

Shnorhali’s *Nnjetselots sharakans*, written in acrostic form, are composed of four parts: “Astvatz ahegh” (Awesome God), “Zhoghovialk” (The Assembled), “Chanaparh” (Journey), and “Rah gortzial” (Path Taken), which accompany the deceased to the next world and express sorrow, compassion, forgiveness, and reflections on life and death.

During Shnorhali’s lifetime there was a tendency to invigorate the foundations of Christian piety and organize church service. In the twelfth century, the danger of heretical movements such as the Paulicians, known among Armenians as *Tondrakians*, still had not disappeared. This movement had spread from the Caucasus to the Balkans, where they were known as Bogomils, and invaded Europe under different names (Cathares, Albigensians, and Waldensians).

For this reason the wise Catholicos Shnorhali used all of his talents to firm up the Armenian Church and faith, and to endow with vigor what he regarded as the two bases of the survival of Armenian nationhood. For centuries his gentle and humble humanitarian sentiments, his search and practice of spirituality and repentance, have marked and shaped Christian philosophy.

The *sharakans* of Shnorhali are noteworthy for the variety and innovation of their poetic form. Many of his *sharakans* are written in four-syllable iambic with eight (4 + 4) syllable meter form or free verse. Shnorhali the monk was aware of the alluring light musical meter of lay love songs, and he incorporated it into religious versification. And since both the poetry and music were created by Shnorhali himself, the meter

sounded more perfect and musicality became the most characteristic feature of his compositions.

Traditions of centuries of Armenian song meld in the *sharakans* of Shnorhali and yield a new high quality where the force of melody is powerful and the use of certain elements of *gusan* music is noticeable. Tahmizian wrote: "He [Shnorhali] continued the literary and musical development of Eastern Christian musicology already achieved within the Assyrian/Byzantine milieu with a high-quality artistic production and in general, as a multi-faceted musician, revitalized the art of the famous ancient giants of the genre, such as Ephraem Syrus, Romanos the Singer, and John Damascene."³⁵ In Armenian chants and spiritual music Shnorhali remains the most talented individual of his time. Versed in the nuances of Eastern music, he cultivated symmetry and asymmetry thereby bringing it nearer to the Western type.³⁶ The art of Shnorhali's *sharakans*, their language and style, aesthetics and subject matter, the connection and inspiration of word and music, the forms of self-expression and feeling, continue and complete the most ancient traditions of Armenian spiritual chant and music, handed down from Mashtots and Khorenatsi.

"The *sharakans* written by him [Shnorhali]," writes the present Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin I Sarkissian, "are among the most beautiful. From the standpoint of poetic works, he was for the Armenian Church what Romanos was for the Greek Orthodox Church and much more than Wesley or Keble were for the Church of England. Indeed, his prayers may be considered among the finest examples in Christian spiritual literature."³⁷

After Nerses Shnorhali, Armenian *sharakan* writing did not produce any prominent personalities. The twelfth to fifteenth centuries constituted the final period in the development of *sharakans*. During this period a few names, however, do stand out.

One such author was *NERSES LAMBRONATSI* (1153-1198), a noted speaker, cleric, politician, philosopher, musician, and translator in Cilician Armenia.³⁸ He wrote prose as well as poetry, *sharakans*, verses, and the poem "Govest nerboghakan" (Eulogy). Twenty-three *sharakans* are attributed to Lambronatsi, for which he wrote the music (and personally sang them). They are dedicated to the feasts of Resurrection and Assumption and to St. Gregory the Illuminator.

These spiritual chants, in contradistinction to the sad songs of repentance, are joyous and have a lively beat—a peculiarity not characteristic of the general spirit of Armenian *sharakans*. Here Lambronatsi glorifies Christ's sacrifice and resurrection, which brings the renewal of life and eternal salvation to the human soul ("Norogial kghzik" [Renewed Islands]). Metaphorically described is the Heavenly Bridegroom's—Christ's—love for his bride, the Church.

Church of God, married to the Heavenly Bridegroom,
Wear hallowed gold ornaments beneath your clothing,
For, behold! Christ the king of glory is coming to you.
Sons of Zion rejoice in Christ the King,
Joyfully celebrate this nuptial
Of our souls renewed of old beliefs,
And with the angels let us bless
Christ, the king of glory.³⁹

In the Easter *sharakan*, "Aisor hariav i merelots" (Today He Rose From the Dead), the author experiences joy at the resurrection of Christ and glorifies it with imagery of light:

Today the ineffable light from light
Illuminated your children,
Light up O Jerusalem,
Since your light, Christ, has resurrected.
Today the darkness of ignorance
Was dispelled by triple light.
And upon you dawned the light of knowledge,
Christ, resurrected from the dead.⁴⁰

The joy of Christ's resurrection, the glad tidings and blessings of the angels, the Mother of God who is compared to a "temple of light"; these and other images are full of comforting, happy, and encouraging sentiments.

Authored by Lambronatsi is a series of prayers for Ascension. Of this group, the best is the *sharakan* "Tzagumn miatzni" (Birth of the Only-Begotten) which stands out for its descriptions of nature and light.

Here Christ appears in a halo on the Cross, while during the Ascension He becomes a fiery light whose intensity dazzles the guards.

The founder of the Armenian Church, St. Gregory the Illuminator and his descendants who defended Christianity and were martyred for the faith, are praised by Lambronatsi in three *sharakans*. These and his other *sharakans* are generally poetic, full of fervent belief, and reveal Shnorhali's considerable influence.

Among Lambronatsi's students was the thirteenth-century *sharakan* writer, GRIGOR SKEVRATSI (Lambronatsi) from Cilicia. Well known among his songs is the poem "Aregakann ardarutian" (Sun of Righteousness), dedicated to the feast of the birth of John the Baptist. This *sharakan* is written in alphabetical order and is noteworthy from an artistic standpoint.

Among that century's authors of spiritual songs also belong the Catholicos HAKOB KLAYETSI and HOVHANNES PLUZ YERZNKATSI. The beautiful *sharakan* "Yergetsek, vordik Sioni" (Sing, Sons of Zion) belongs to Hakob Klayetsi's pen; Hovhannes Yerznkatsi is known for *sharakans* glorifying the greatness of St. Gregory the Illuminator.⁴¹ Especially noteworthy is the wonderful and extended *sharakan* "Aisor zvarchatsial" (Today, Joyous), written in alphabetical order. St. Gregory the Illuminator is viewed as the beacon which leads to immortality and divine light and infuses the human heart with comfort and joy. The *sharakan* is full of metaphors, similes, and allegory.

A marvellous new garden was planted in the land of Armenia
By the dedicated efforts of lord Gregory.
Sanctified in streams of sermons on the true Word,
Lush with wondrous plants.
Heavenly light reflected upon the rejoicing earth,
And brightened in the brilliance of the Sun of life.⁴²

St. Gregory the Illuminator, the personification of goodness, is the shepherd who "sweetly" calls his wandering flock. He is the chosen of God, the pride of the Arshakuni crown, the "radiant flower" who filled the land of Armenia with sweet fragrance. The Illuminator is "physician of the soul," "sweet-tasting date," "tormented martyr,"

“triumphant martyr,” “shining path,” and “matchless glory.” This is a luminous hymn, lavishly drenched in colors, written with genuine love, and with words pouring from a sanctified soul. Although adorned with many epithets, it conveys a plain and sincere impression.

Attributed to thirteenth-century *sharakan* writer *VARDAN VARDAPET* (Areveltsi, The Great) are ten *sharakans*, among which “Vork zardaretsin tnorinabar zimasts aneghin” (Those Who Majestically Adorned the Meanings of the Uncreated) is noteworthy. This consists of four stanzas and is sung to this day on the feast of the Translators. The *sharakan* is dedicated to the Armenian translators Sahak, Mesrop, and their students. Here Mashtots is exalted as creator of the Armenian alphabet and literature; and the Armenian spiritual song and its authors are praised:

They proved to kings, nations, and peoples the sublimity
Of the radiant spiritual chants of the upper Zion chosen hosts.⁴³

The *sharakan* “Vork zardaretsin tnorinabar zimasts aneghin” is written with beautiful imagery and a unique approach, reflecting the author’s patriotism. The *sharakans* of Vardan Vardapet dedicated to the Translators are a blend of the spiritual and national and are among the best specimens of Armenian-Christian culture.

The final author in the *Sharaknots* is *KIRAKOS YERZINKATSI* (1270s-1356), well known for his *sharakan* “Arevelk gerarpin” (The East Rejoices), written in alphabetic order.⁴⁴ The Mother of God is praised there, styled “radiant/brilliant” and “lodging place of the Light-born,” as an intercessor between the Only-Begotten and humanity. She is “born of light” and the “flower which never fades,” comforter of the human race, whose blessed spirit and body, the holy hosts, soaring like eagles, transport to heavenly Jerusalem, with Christ’s disciples participating in a great procession.

Light of light born from the bosom of the Father,
You descended from Heaven to the lower world.
Hosts of spirits descended down to You,
In honor of Your mother, the Virgin,

Saying this as a eulogy:
You are the temple of the ineffable Word.

Inscrutable mystery profound,
Forever hidden from nations,
Was revealed in the last year,
To save the race of man;
Which the seers proclaimed:
The Word was born to the Virgin.

The mystery eternally concealed,
Silent and ineffable,
When the time came
Was gifted to humankind;
The essential nature of the Word
Mixed untroubled with our nature.⁴⁵

All rejoice “with tears” and “in delight,” celebrating the feast of the Assumption of the Mother of God and performing songs and dances of blessing “in honor of the Mother the Most-Blessed one.” In a small acrostic section at the end of the *sharakan*, Yerznkatsi reveals his name, “Kirakos Vardapet.” “Arevelk gerarpin” is beautiful poetry written with imagination, where there is action, movement, and emotion.

* * *

Thus, the study of *sharakans* of the fifth through fifteenth centuries reveals certain general and specific features which characterize it as a distinct literary genre. They were written in free or metered form, consisting of three or more stanzas (օրհոօ) and having diverse poetic meters. Since *sharakans* were created to be sung and not read, their meter was adjusted to the rhythm and tempo of the music.

Armenian *sharakans* principally have both meter and rhyme, although the oldest *sharakans* were written with free meter and were unrhymed. While the use of certain types of meter are observable in spiritual chants of the fifth through seventh centuries, nonetheless, the use of rhyming appears after the tenth century in Armenian literature, especially in the works of Nerses Shnorhali and in his century. One of

the unique features of the *sharakan* is the use of acrostic, with either the first letter of each verse or line forming a name or message. A chorus or refrain emphasizes the musical rhythm, sometimes imitating examples taken from the Bible or the Psalms. As a literary genre *sharakans* are creations of high artistic value, endowed with imagery of nature, metaphors and similes, epithets, and generally, a colorful vocabulary.

From an aesthetic point of view, the principal and distinguishing characteristic of the *sharakan* is its essential musicality. And since *sharakans* were written to be sung at a variety of different spiritual-religious festivals, they are polyphonic, according to their type and melodic performance. They were written in *khaz* notation and have survived in numerous manuscripts from the thirteenth through nineteenth centuries, possessing definite tunes (eight modes and two panmodalities). Almost all of them have been preserved since they were used in an obligatory fashion.

The melodies of *sharakans* fundamentally divide into three types. The first, to which the best-preserved *sharakans* belong, are called psalmodic and have melodies independent of the words and free forms of singing. The second are intersyllabic, where words and melody have the same weight. These are comprised of distinct vocal parts with great emotionality. The third type are the modulative *sharakans* which rise and fall, and are free compositions with differing meters. The musicality takes precedence over the words or lyrics. Polyphony, depending on the section of the service, makes the service more impressive. This not only gives strength to the spiritual message but also sensitizes and refines the listener's musical taste and gives him lofty, spiritual feelings.

The music of *sharakans*, which is Eastern in nature, also follows Graeco-Roman spiritual-ecclesiastical melodies. Special musical symbols called *khaz* (meaning "mark/sign" in Greek) were used to write or arrange them.⁴⁶ The Armenian *khaz* notations and the eight-note melodies of church music in their turn resemble the Greek, although over the centuries they were Armenianized.⁴⁷

The spiritual chants created for church service are also the first examples of refined and polished Armenian poetry. For centuries on end they served as the source of spiritual flights, warm and sincere feelings as well as of national advancement, developing taste, literary concepts, versification and music, creating that solid foundation upon which medieval Armenian poetry was built with its delicate lyricism and lay

spirit. This process was helped by the secularization of Armenian literature, brought about by perceptions of the tenth through fourteenth centuries, altering traditional medieval images of life and the world, and focusing on the specific and the material.

Part II

Medieval Literature (Tenth to Seventeenth Centuries)

8. Armenian Literature in the Tenth to Fourteenth Centuries

The long period of peace following the fall of Arab rule in the middle of the tenth century brought with it major changes in Armenia. This period was an important stage in nearly all aspects of Armenian life and had particular significance for the growth of national culture.

By the tenth century, the precursors and internal prerequisites of secularization already were evident, and growing and spreading, they flourished in Armenia proper (Bagratuni Kingdom) and in Cilicia until the fall of the latter's kingdom at the end of the fourteenth century.

* * *

Arab rule in Armenia lasted from the seventh to the end of the ninth century. It is remembered as a dark period in Armenian history. The Arab invasions depopulated the land, razed Armenia's flourishing cities and historical monuments, destroyed the country's internal autonomy. In the most important centers, Arab governors were appointed and Armenian lands were resettled with Arabs. Thousands of Armenians were enslaved and killed, and the country was subjected to heavy tribute and taxation.

For a full two centuries Armenia was in turmoil raising bloody revolts against the Arabs. From peasants to princes Armenians were mobilized to drive the Arab oppressors out of their homeland.

The struggle of the Armenian people against the Caliphate in the eighth to ninth centuries was not in vain. It undermined Arab rule in Armenia, and at the end of the ninth century native rule was restored. In 885 the Bagratuni Kingdom was founded, and in 908, the Artzruni Kingdom was established in Vaspurakan, separate from the Bagratuni Kingdom.

From the ninth to the middle of the eleventh century, Armenia enjoyed a long period of peace, creating favorable conditions for general prosperity in the country.

In the middle of the eleventh century Armenia was again subjected to invasions: the Byzantines from the west and Seljuk-Turkic hordes from the east. At a time when the danger of these hordes threatened not only Armenia but also the Byzantine Empire, the latter, violating Armenian political autonomy, drove the local military forces from the Armenian border toward the Balkans and imposed a regime of forced resettlement and assimilation on the people. These moves in the end harmed both Armenia and the Byzantine Empire itself. The Seljuks, a Central Asian people, overran and destroyed the defenseless Armenian lands in the eleventh century and invaded Byzantium's eastern border with fatal consequences for the future of the Byzantine Empire.

In the first quarter of the twelfth century, the Armenians and Georgians joined forces under the leadership of two Georgian generals of Armenian descent, the Zakarian brothers, and liberated one part of Armenia from Seljuk yoke, establishing the Zakarian principedom in the northern part of the country. The devastated economy of the country began to recover, and cultural life regained its vitality.

The Zakarians, however, did not succeed in uniting all of Armenia under their rule; thus the country was unprepared to fight against the yet fiercer Mongol hordes. From the second quarter of the thirteenth century, the land of Armenia again lost its autonomy and was subject to destructive invasions of the Mongols, the likes of which, in fierceness and devastation, Armenia had not known before. Yet, after the country was conquered, in the thirteenth century, the Mongols tried to establish law and order in the land, to keep the people at peace and stop pillage. They even rebuilt ruined cities, renovating monasteries, building roads and encouraging international trade. The most populous cities of this time were Dvin, Ani, Kars and Yerznka. Armenia, however, was straining under heavy and excessive tribute, from which the Church and clergy were exempt. They, in turn, became involved in secular activities. They built monasteries, supported scientific and educational work at Tatev monastery and the universities of Gladzor and Noravank, which became important centers of art and letters. The country was not yet so devastated that it could not think of enlightenment and salvation. The many buildings and rebellions by the Armenians and Georgians in the

thirteenth century are evidence of this. Unfortunately, this period of restoration did not last long. In the days of Ghazan Khan (1295-1304) the Mongols converted to Islam; the Armenians' situation grew worse and persecutions increased. In subsequent centuries, Armenia's economy fell apart and cities and villages became deserted, because nearly all classes of people, from nobles to peasants, emigrated.

Founded in the eleventh century on the northeastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia met a similar fate. This kingdom took shape centuries before the Seljuk invasions by Armenians of Cilicia and Antioch. Later, hundreds of thousands of Armenians, fleeing the oppression of the Seljuk Turks in the eleventh century, overturned Byzantine rule in Cilicia and founded the Armenian Rubinian Kingdom. It lasted 300 years (1080-1375), exhibiting rapid economic, commercial, and cultural development. The Cilician Armenian state entered into relations with such European lands as Italy, Byzantium, Crimea as well as Antioch, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Iran, and India. Trade became Cilicia's greatest source of income, as a result of which the capital Sis and the ports of Tarsus and Ayas flourished, and Selucia, Adana, and Anavarza became populous centers of active trade. Cilician culture grew and developed in close connection with traditional Armenian culture. The Rubinian and Hetumian kings supported culture and the arts, founding educational centers and collecting large numbers of medieval manuscripts. The monasteries of Akner, Drazark, Sis, Tarsus, Skevra, Mlich, Arkayakaghni, Percher, and Sev Ler became centers of learning and the arts, giving rise to notable figures in many different fields. It was not for nothing that Cilicia earned the reputation at the time of being a "land of philosophers and lovers of learning," where women as well as men wrote and read. In the history of Armenian culture and learning, the following Cilician figures occupy places of special importance: the historians Smbat Sparapet (Constable, 1208-1276), Lusignan King Levon VI's secretary Hovhannes Dardel (fourteenth century); the physicians Mkhitar Heratsi (1120-1200), Abu-Said (twelfth century), Grigoris (twelfth to thirteenth centuries); the philosophers Nerses Lambronatsi (1153-1198), Vahram Rabuni (thirteenth century), Hovhannes Yerznkatsi Pluz (c. 1230-1293); the writers Nerses Shnorhali (1101-1173), Vardan Aygektsi (twelfth to thirteenth centuries); the Catholicoi Grigor II Vkayaser (eleventh century), Grigor III Pahlavuni (c. 1093-1166), Grigor IV Tgha (c.

1133-1193), Grigor Skevratsi (twelfth to thirteenth century), Vardan Bardzrberdtsi (thirteenth century). Hetum Patmich's ("the Historian," thirteenth century) *Patmutiun tatarats* (History of the Tatars) was read throughout Europe. It was written upon the request of Pope Clement V, in French, then translated into Latin. This work was later translated from Latin into Dutch, Italian, English, and Armenian (by Mkrtich Avgerian, 1842, Venice).

Graphic arts also flourished in Cilicia in the form of lively and colorful miniatures adorning the covers and pages of manuscripts. Kostandin (twelfth century), Grigor Mlichetsi (d. 1215), Toros Roslin (thirteenth century), Sargis Pitzak (fourteenth century), and others left a magnificent legacy that bears the splendor of medieval art.

Unfortunately, the flourishing state of the country did not last long. Surrounded by non-Christian peoples, Cilicia from the middle of the fourteenth century was periodically subjected to Turkmen and Mamluk attacks, which weakened and gnawed away at the country. The treaty with the Mongols did not help Cilicia, since the Mongol empire had already fallen apart in the thirteenth century. And the pleas sent by Cilician kings to both European powers and the Pope, seeking help from the Christians and asking for a new crusade, remained unanswered. Instead, the ascending Egyptian Sultanate conquered the Latin kingdoms of the Near East and, after numerous attacks, finally wore down the Cilician forces. Unable to oppose the overwhelming Egyptian forces any longer, the Armenians surrendered in 1375, and the country's last king, Levon VI Lusignan, was taken captive with his family, putting an end to the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia. The people and especially noble families fled the country and settled in Europe, and in 1441 the Armenian Catholicosate returned from Sis to Ejmiatzin.

* * *

As much as these fluctuations in Armenia's historical fate made her existence and progress more tenuous, still the comparatively peaceful periods provided an impetus for lively headway in nearly all aspects of the economy, trade, crafts, and culture. This was especially true of the Bagratuni period, when Armenia enjoyed nearly a hundred years of peaceful, creative life.

The development of crafts and trade brought forth an unprecedented flourishing of city life. The Armenian cities of Ani, Dvin, Nakhijevan, Van, Karin, Manazkert, and Kars expanded and became centers of crafts and trade. Ani, Dvin, and Artzn had populations of more than 100,000, which surpassed the population of many European cities severalfold.

At the end of the ninth century, parallel with the rise in urban construction, Armenian architecture came to the fore. Many designs and structures of high artistic merit have reached us from the tenth century. Today they lie in complete or partial ruin, but they are evidence of the high state of development of medieval art. The most glorious structures of that period are those of Ani and Vaspurakan, the complexes on the island of Aghtamar and in Vostan.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, huge architectural monuments were erected in Haghpat, Sanahin, Goshavank, Geghard, Tatev, Kecharis, Ohanavank, etc., of which many have been preserved to this day, inspiring admiration for their unique style and perfection.

Sculpture formed an essential part of the development of these monuments. The walls and columns of buildings, the altars and domes of churches, the capitals and entrances are decorated with delicate and refined bas-relief and designs, whose fine, incisive lines are striking for their intricacy and originality. Following the new secular lines and logic, masters of the time immortalized eloquent images of nature and life in metaphorical bas-relief, which had numerous schemes, and amazed the observer with their exquisite art and high inspiration. The famous Armenian *khachkars* (cross-stones) and mausolea are especially well-wrought with ingenious sculpture.

Illustrations are an inseparable part of ancient Armenian manuscripts. More than 25,000 illuminated manuscripts have survived to this day, attesting to the high artistic taste of the time, which in turn is tied to the demands of civilized life. The most important miniaturists of the time were Toros Roslin (thirteenth century) and Sargis Pitzak (fourteenth century) in Cilicia; Margar in Ani; Toros Taronatsi and Momik in Gladzor (fourteenth century). Pictures with religious and secular themes, as well as frescoes on the walls of royal palaces and churches, are presented in splendid compositions with fine blending of colors.

The renaissance was also felt in national music. Popular secular songs and sacred music were composed. Parallel with the arts, natural sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, and natural philosophy were revitalized. Medicine, in the tenth to thirteenth centuries, due to Armenia's interrelationship with ancient Greek and Hellenic countries, reached great heights.¹ Such notable physicians as Mkhitar Heratsi (twelfth century) and Grigoris (thirteenth century) lived and worked in Cilicia. Mkhitar Heratsi's *Jermants mkhitarutium* (Cure for Fevers), written in colloquial Armenian, with its scientific depth and theoretical and practical insights, is an important contribution to Armenian medical history.

* * *

Changes in social relations and conditions brought a new world view and philosophy, directed against religious principles and weakening the supremacy of Church and nobility. The unlimited power wielded by the Church from the seventh century brought forth deep discontent in peasant masses who, opposing the doctrines of Christianity and feudal orders, pursued an independent world view outside religious thought. This world view reexamined the relationship between man and God and tried to expose the earlier, purer, bases of that relationship. It was found that Christianity had been corrupted and strayed from its fundamental and rational positions.

Such was the content of the Armenian reformation, whose standard bearers were the Paulicians of the seventh through ninth centuries. This was a heretical movement in nature, a peasant rebellion expressing the anger and discontentment of the lower and middle classes, which at the end of the ninth century gave birth to the Tondrakite (*Tondrakians*) movement, named after the place of its origin, Tondrak, and lasting until the eleventh century.

The Tondrakites, whose leader was Smbat Zarehavantsi, were a popular mass movement and, like the Paulicians, rejected the Church with all its mysteries, sacraments, and holy orders. More radical than earlier heretical movements, they rejected the Bible and Christ and lived in groups, similar to communities of the early Christian era, free of church ceremonies and rites, and without clerical orders under an egalitarian law.² This was a counterpart to the urge to reform the Church

and reexamine Christianity which Europe underwent in the seventeenth century with Martin Luther. In the Armenian milieu, this movement continued for two centuries and was violently persecuted by the united forces of Armenia and Byzantium.

The Tondrakite movement with its ideology is an interesting phenomenon in the Middle Ages. Outside Armenia it found a following in the Byzantine Empire as well as France and Italy.

* * *

The social and economic events throughout the entire country altered traditional concepts and tastes as well as peoples' psychology and mentality. All the standards which reigned for centuries, gradually changed, liberated from clerical bonds, and came forth as new and fresh secular, legal, governmental, moral, artistic, and literary ideas, diametrically opposed to the ecclesiastical concepts reigning up to that time. The moral restraints, wrought for centuries, gave way to more vital and life-loving attitudes tending toward the natural and human.

Historians of this period, Matteos Urhayetsi, Aristakes Lastiverttsi, Stepanos Asoghik, and others roundly criticized secular customs in Armenia, the weakening of ascetic religious spirit, the lifestyle and greed of the clergy. These religious historians considered the fall of Christian morality to be the cause of the destruction of Armenia's cities and desolation in the country. They saw the Seljuk-Turk and Mongol invasions as punishment for dissolute secular practices. The historian Aristakes Lastiverttsi, speaking about the luxury and opulent lifestyle in his native Artzn, the elegant and ornate clothing and houses, shows that all the conditions were in place for life-loving and carefree enjoyment, when they "attended only festivals of joyful songs."³

These were phenomena which in their nature and contents were tied to the secularization of life, symbolized by expanded philosophical and cultural ideas and a humanistic ideology.

Among the secular figures of this era, *GRIGOR MAGISTROS* (985-1058) played an important role. A scion of the Pahlavuni clan, he was an open-minded prince of many talents. Grigor received his education in Ani, in the Pahlavuni palace, where learning and building were highly valued. He became a scholar, a wise political and military

figure for which he received the honored title "magistros" from the Byzantine Emperor. With the aim of escaping the Seljuk-Tatar destruction, Magistros ceded his possessions to Byzantium and in its place received lands in Mesopotamia and the office of governor of Mesopotamia. To him belonged also Vaspurakan, Taron, and other southern regions of Armenia.

Magistros's skilled and liberal political and intellectual workstyle earned him renown. He built monasteries (Bzhni, Kecharis, Garni, etc.), founded an academy, and wrote *Meknutium Kerakanin* (Commentary on the Grammarian). Magistros conducted a wide range of translational and educational activity. He translated Plato's *Timaeus* and the works of Phaedrus and Euclid, convinced that the art of antiquity is a storehouse of knowledge.

Magistros's intellectual liberalism and national spirit delved into the fields of science, art, history, and theology as well. In everything, he sought new attitudes and interpretations. According to him, religious knowledge and education were not sufficient. Beyond the Bible, there were fields of science which he schematized and taught at his private academy as "liberal arts." Logic, grammar, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music were included in his curriculum as advanced courses aside from religion.

Grigor Magistros was at the same time a theologian and philosopher, which imposed divergent demands on him. He considered the teaching of secular knowledge, such as legends, myths, and tales, as important as spiritual teaching. Indeed, Greek culture armed him with a large store of knowledge, which he tried to transfer to the intellectual circles of his people.

Magistros's *Tghter* (Epistles) express his understanding of literature, philosophy, writers of antiquity, and art, and have historical value as well. They are important to understanding both Magistros and the literary and historical ideas of his time. His plain style imparts literary charm to the subject matter, embellished with anecdotes, tales, and legends, enhancing the artistic value of *Epistles*.⁴

Magistros wrote works in verse form as well, notable among which is *Hazartoghian ar Manuche* (Thousand Line Poem to Manuche), 1,016 lines, a concise retelling of the scriptures and Armenian church history.

Ancient Greek philosophy and art, especially literature, were Magistros's favorite disciplines. In his opinion, Greek poetry with its "ingenuity" and "logical" structure, its Homeric and Platonic forms was the basis of "all art and letters."⁵ He considered the Homeric verses to be composed with high art, "ably turned" in "epic dimensions." His works "On the Cross-shaped Staff" and "To Grigor Bishop of Mekk" clearly bear the influence of Homer. It is not surprising that Magistros esteems Homer highly and gives his poetry high praise, characterizing it as "crystal clear, golden filigree of metrics, miracle of elocution," and "gushing ode."⁶ This is what the twelfth-century poet Nerses Shnorhali had in mind when he wrote:

Measured in the manner of Homer,
Expressed in the manner of Plato,
Steeped in the art of the Greeks,
Learned from their sages.⁷

The traditional development of Armenian historiography continued in the ninth to tenth centuries. Historians recorded events and assembled facts about social life. Local and dynastic history began to be written. Historians of the Bagratuni house were Shapuh Bagratuni (eighth to ninth centuries), whose *History* has not reached us, and Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi (ninth to tenth centuries).⁸ The history of the Artzruni kings was written by Tovma Artzruni (tenth century) and the Anonymous Historian (tenth century). Stepanos Taronetsi (Asoghik, tenth to eleventh centuries) also wrote his universal history in this period. These were almost the last representatives of ancient Armenian historiography. After them, historiography grew closer to chronology and was devoid of literary, artistic structure, and contents. In the twelfth century the chronologies of Matteos Urhayetsi, Samuel Anetsi, Mkhitar Anetsi, and others appeared. Life, in all its aspects and with its progressive understanding, penetrated literature and art, as a result of which literary genres and concepts were more clearly defined and differentiated. For this reason, gradually developing literature acquired a variety of forms, while historiography became a dry chronological record.

Literary language changed as well. Fifth-century Armenian was no longer used in its classic form, despite the fact that in their writings

authors continued to follow the language of the Golden Age. These authors and writers of subsequent generations, chiefly the historians, influenced by the Hellenizing school, produced works with an artificial style and full of grammatical errors and borrowed passages. A few attempted to write in colloquial style, "peasant talk," so that they would be comprehensible to everyone (Asoghik, *Universal History*; Ukhtanes, *History of the Armenians*; Shapuh Bagratuni, etc.).

Patmutiun hayots (History of the Armenians) by HOVHANNES DRASKHANAKERTTSI (c. 850-c. 930) has both literary and historical merit. It covers from the Flood to the first quarter of the tenth century.⁹ Insofar as Draskhanakerttsi tells of the events of his lifetime in more detail as a living and feeling observer, the second part of the history covering the second half of the ninth century has more literary and historical value than the compressed first part of the history, which he based on Armenian historians, especially Khorenatsi and Yeghishe. The second part of the work is written with unique artistic merit, lively observations and psychology, an interesting development of events and experiences, and with stirring autobiographical detail.

As Catholicos (from 897), Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi was steeped in the political culture of his time. He witnessed the founding of the Bagratuni Kingdom, the battles that were waged to secure it, the horrors of the Arab attacks, and the atrocities of the Atropatene tyrant Emir Yusuf. He often played the role of intermediary among Armenian princes, kings, and Atropatene governors and was troubled by inner conflicts among the princes. Draskhanakerttsi condemned the disunity among the *nakharars* and the lack of general national consciousness, which he considered the chief cause of Armenia's destruction.

Leo considered Draskhanakerttsi's work a "lamenting history."¹⁰ In his account of the death of King Smbat I (891-915), the heroic battles waged by Ashot Yerkat, Yusuf's campaigns and the treachery of the Arab governors, Draskhanakerttsi presents scenes of famine, deportation, carnage, and misery, as distinctly bitter and humiliating psychological states in the tragedy of human life. Here is how he describes the miserable condition of the defenseless people:

The great leaders were sheltered in recesses and retreats and cloisters and dens and forts, while the barefoot and naked refugees, stricken with famine and thirst, consumed and

abandoned, wandered the mountains and fields. Some, frozen in the snow-covered frost of the winter's cold, were maimed and strangled. And others were burned and roasted, scorched in the summer's infernal blistering heat. And, those weakened by the sudden flight were betrayed into the hands of apostates, felled by their unsparing merciless sword, irrigating the face of the earth with their blood. And some were taken into slavery like beasts, and many weak men and women and innocent children, like lambs driven among wolves, were slain. And those who were intended to be sold as slaves were taken out and separated from the others, snatching son from father, brother from brother, wife from husband, mother from daughter, bride from in-law, suckling babe from mother's breasts. And there were heartrending scenes, unconsolable laments, unbearable wailing, beating of breasts and drooping of eye-lids, and shaking of the body, and terror of the heart, and screams of despair, and defacement of beauty, and the tearing out of hair. And those not worth selling or putting into Sodomite servitude were driven in irons and prisons and chains, beaten and tortured. According to the foreign Homeric rule, for the husky and for the scrawny they demanded the same weight in gold or silver treasure. And at the same time, young and old condemned to the same death, left this world by murder. And yet others had their blood sucked little by little as by Solomonic leeches, killed by this sinister unquenchable greed. And others died by being tricked into drinking poison, as if out of mercy for them, from those who committed these evils. And others were slaughtered like animals by ingenious methods of suffocation, and the lives of others were atrociously violated, for while they were standing, the executioner cut open their stomachs, and before they breathed their last, they would tear out their livers, giving their parts to each other as some kind of fulfillment of their foul oblations.¹¹

From the point of view of style, in the first part of his history, Draskhanakerttsi copied the patterns of the poetic arts, expressions, and images of classical writers Khorenatsi and Yeghishe. His style is rhetorical, full of expressive turns of speech, making depictions and digressions impressive.

Draskhanakerttsi wrote his history in old age and is the only primary source on that period. It was translated into French (in 1841) and into Georgian (in 1965) and into English (in 1987). The oldest list of Armenian Catholicoi, his "*List of Catholicoi of the Armenians*" has also reached us. It gives short biographical information on each patriarch up to the tenth century.

Also worthy of note is the work of tenth-century historian *TOVMA ARTZRUNI* (dates unknown), *Patmutiun tann Artzruniats* (History of the House of Artzruni).¹² As historian of the Artzrunis, Tovma Artzruni presents that dynasty's past, weaving it with historical events of Armenia and its neighboring countries, Persia and the Arab state.

The work consists of four parts extending from prehistoric times to the author's. The first part of the history, which covers up to 850, is not of great merit. With respect to events of his time, consolidation of the Bagratuni Kingdom and political ascendancy of the Artzrunis, Tovma emerges as a reliable, contemporary, nonpartisan chronicler. From this point of view, the fifth and seventh chapters of Part II and all of Part III are of great value, where he tells of the Arab invasions of Armenia in the mid-ninth century. He presents the horrible invasion of Bugha (851), the enslavement of Armenian princes, the resettlement of Muslim tribes in Armenia, the pillage and plunder, the people's rebellions and internal struggles. The tendency to follow classical models, such as Khorenatsi and mainly Yeghishe, are deeply accentuated in Artzruni's work. From these sources comes the masterly depiction of massive battle and war scenes and military operations.

The last part of the history is rich with many artistic digressions and vivid images possessing literary charm and import. Among these are the rebellion of Sasuntsis against the Arabs and their victory (this later became the basis of the Armenian epic), the detailed description of various architectural monuments, the accounts of military operations, which reflect the life and indomitable will of the people of Vaspurakan in their struggle against the Arabs in the mid-ninth century. Artzruni's work is prized also because it records in living pictures numerous traditions of Van and Vaspurakan practiced in his time.

Tovma Artzruni's *History* is incomplete. A history of the Artzruni dynasty by an anonymous author together with a colophon has

been appended to the book's last, twenty-ninth, chapter. Until the end of the nineteenth century, this was considered part of Tovma's history. Later philological studies have attributed it to the Anonymous Historian or Artzruni.¹³

The *ANONYMOUS HISTORIAN* (tenth century), about whom no biographical information has been preserved, speaks high praise for King Gagik Artzruni and his whole family. King Gagik is praised as an absolute monarch, as a strong individual, as a fearless military commander, with a virile appearance and forceful personality.

A luminous figure of glorious stature, unequaled among corporeal rational beings; even and straight, pleasant and bright of face; with a smoke gray head of hair, densely curled and flowing over upon his forehead; with fine, arched eyebrows, and pupils and eyelashes luscious as fruit, shaped like the lilies of the valley in bloom ... His lips as a red bow, his teeth closely set and polished. His whiskers like violets blooming on his ruddy cheeks, he appeared as the blessed to onlookers.¹⁴

His image has acquired the romantic breadth and nuances of an art-loving activist, complemented by the historian's wonderful description of the buildings in Vostan town and Aghtamar island. Here is felt the world-view of the Armenian king, engulfed by current issues of the times and arts, as well as the Anonymous Historian's deep enthusiasm and secular admiration toward all these.

What follows is the inspiring poetic depiction of Vostan fortress, built in the time of Gagik Artzruni's reign:

And the fortress is on a summit, overlooking the sea, extremely attractive. If the sea is agitated by the wind, the florid waves play and appear appealing; and if the air is clear, one's eyes can see everything in all directions. Therefore, the king undertook to build there cathedrals and chambers and streets of magnificent beauty and various other monuments beyond description. With the base at an unreachable depth, the seaward side was fortified by strong rocks upon which, facing the sea, he built a cathedral decorated in gold and adorned with glistening ornaments, reflecting the rays of the sun for the amusement of the eyes and

for the joy of the heart, for him and his family. And the doors are arched, allowing cool air in and at the same time light rays to shine, glimmering at dawn and dusk upon the sea, reflecting upon the heart of the cathedral and in variegated flickers unfurling on the scenic array of buildings, amazing the minds of observers and surpassing the teller's ability to recount.¹⁵

The *History* by *ARISTAKES LASTIVERTTSI* is devoted to the grave and fateful period of the Seljuk Turk invasions. Written between 1072 and 1079 it recounts the events of his lifetime.¹⁶

Aristakes Lastiverttsi (dates unknown) was born in the village of Lastivert, not far from the city of Artzn in Karin province. He was a *vardapet* and an eyewitness to the Seljuk-Turk invasion and destruction of Armenia. His *History* contains twenty-five chapters, has a preface entitled "Events in Armenia" and a conclusion, "Colophon to this work." The work chiefly treats Armenian-Byzantine relations in the first half of the eleventh century, the Seljuk-Turk invasions which brought mass killings and devastation, and the Tondrakite movement. It covers one of the most turbulent periods in Armenian history, when Byzantine incursions and Seljuk-Turk invasions destroyed the Armenian Bagratuni Kingdom. Sharp disputes over the throne, a comprehensive description of the occupation of Taik, details of the ceding of the Armenian capital of Ani to Byzantium, the circumstances surrounding Constantine IX Monomachus's (1042- 1055) occupation of Ani (1045), the traitorous acts of Vest Sargis and Kirakos are included in the history. Lastiverttsi is the first to recount the Seljuk invasions of 1047-48 as well as the decisive battle of Manzikert in 1071. Reflecting upon all these events, he expresses directly his attitude toward the incidents, the betrayals, the occupation, and destruction of the land. The tragedy at the core of each event touches his emotions; and he, together with the train of events, brings forward his experiences:

A land, which once like the verdant gardens of paradise, was thick with foliage and laden with fruit, shone beautifully and happily to the passersby, since the princes sat upon their thrones, with cheerful faces, and like the flowers which bring spring, with blazing colors, attended only festivals of joyful songs and words. There the sounds of the street and the cymbal and other

songs filled listeners with joyful bliss. There also the elders sat at their respective quarters. And mothers, cradling their children in their arms and moved by maternal tenderness, forgot the pains of labor because of their abundant joy, fluttering about like doves over their new chicks. What shall I say about the unbridled attraction and awaking of loving desire between the brides in the chamber and the grooms under the canopy!¹⁷

Lastiverttsi, like other Armenian writers, explained the Armenians' misfortunes through the formula of sin and retribution. He looked upon the peoples' corruption, their dissolute ways and their trampling of God's commandments as the root of evil, and the just retribution, that is punishment, as the direct consequence of the Creator's anger. As a cleric, he defended the traditional principles of the Armenian Church and criticized the heretical Tondrakite movement and its leaders. In this sense, the twenty-second and twenty-third chapters at the end of the book are exceptional. In them he tells of the Armenian Church's persecutions directed against the Tondrakites and their defeat. Thus the book is an important source on the Tondrakite movement and has been made much use of from Chamchian to the present.¹⁸

What identifies Lastiverttsi with his time was his warm attitude toward people and his humanism. He had a lofty opinion of life, mankind, and work and merit, and was deeply hurt by human grief.

Aristakes Lastiverttsi's work has historical and literary merit, written by a patriotic author in lively and picturesque language, with bitter and tearful feelings. The poetic inspiration of his soul was expressed more completely in the prose lamentations of his *History*, which are the outpourings of his heart, written in the manner of Classical Armenian historiography. The preface to the work is an example of one of those rousing passages, given in the form of a lament and contrasts Armenia's one-time glory with its present misery, a technique Armenian writers have continued to use down to the twentieth century.

Lastiverttsi's love and compassion for Armenia are so strong that he often interrupts his narrative to lament over the devastation in the land, the empty pontifical chair, and the dispersed Armenian troops.

The royal estate is in ruins and empty. The once populous land is now uninhabited. Neither are the sounds of joy heard in the

vineyards, or the songs of the winepress. Neither do children play in the presence of their parents, nor do the elderly sit upon chairs in the square. Neither is the sound of wedding heard, nor are the canopies decorated for the bride.¹⁹

Lastiverttsi lived through the horror of the Seljuk onslaught and remembers the happy times of days gone by, describing the good life and nature with picturesque images that demonstrate his literary and artistic abilities, as well as his refined individualism. When portraying the flourishing scenes of his homeland, all in all the most impressive of his depictions, Lastiverttsi does not laud and exaggerate his bright memories but weaves lamentations on them, because he is not able to reconcile himself to what has happened. Nevertheless, his religious worldview does not consider life to be vain. Rather, he grieves over what has been lost, because he loves the world and his homeland. He does not intensify colors; he does not brighten the past or unduly darken the present but accepts reality as it is, relating many telling incidents and thoughts.

Lastiverttsi's style is sometimes simple, sometimes dry, but often vivid, bold and full of emotion. He laments, criticizes, prays, curses, lifting his portrayal to poetic heights. Along these lines, G. M. Manukian was able to rearrange passages into verse:

For the cities were in ruins,
 The houses set afire,
 The mansions set ablaze,
 And royal halls reduced to ashes.
 People destroyed in the square,
 And women taken captive from their homes,
 And nursing babes smashed against rocks,
 And the handsome faces of youths faded.
 And maidens scandalized in public,
 And young men butchered before the aged;
 The gray hair of the elderly turned red with blood,
 And their corpses tumbled over each other.
 The enemies' sword were blinding,
 And their hands lost their strength;
 The strings of their bows broke,

And the arrows of their quivers depleted.
They were in fact bored,
With no mercy in their hearts.²⁰

In order to create picturesque images, the historian uses contrasts, similes, metaphors, hyperbole, exclamations, and rhetorical questions. Thus, the city of Artzn is described by the following comparison: "And our city shone among cities like a jewel with lustrous brightness, consummately beautiful, completely adorned."²¹ Various contrasts—the present with the past, the elder with the younger, mourning with joy, life with destruction—and epithets—a journey without return, a weeping morning, brilliant splendor—and questions—"Why have you forsaken us, God ...?"²² "Till when shall this tale of unspeakable evil be told ...?"²³ etc.—and exclamations—"Alas, woe, where, oh!,"—and hyperbole—"... and in time the fine city became a pit of blood,"²⁴ etc.—and other stylistic forms are conjoined and fashion an artistic composition, resulting in a series of epic pages in the book. Such episodes include the preface, the colophons, the defense of Manzikert, the descriptions of the occupation, and mass destruction of Ani.

The historian's plain and elegant narrative style is close to that of the language of Golden Age Armenian writers. The depth of feeling has drawn forth the richness of the Armenian language and found proper imagery, shocking and impressive expressive forms, and a wealthy lexicon, creating an elegiac composition, packed with emotion.

After the twelfth century Armenian historiography lost its artistic character and became a dry chronological record. The artistic flair, which infused Armenian historiography with its lyricism, constructed its models, characters, and actions, manifesting itself in works of literary value, gradually gave way to chronicles and annals devoid of their former literary merit. Such was the *Chronicle* of the historian MATTEOS URHAYETSI (Matthew of Edessa) (c. 1050 to c. 1144), covering the events from 952 to 1136.²⁵

During Urhayetsi's time grave events were taking place in the Middle East. Seljuk Turks invaded Persia, Syria, and Palestine and occupied the Byzantine region of Asia Minor. Armenians, who had barely become liberated from Arab yoke, were subjected to Seljuk-Turk invasions and treacherous Byzantine politics. "In those times," writes Urhayetsi, "the infidel hordes, who are called *Turks*, invaded the

Armenian province of Vaspurakan and began to slaughter Christians mercilessly.... This was the first appearance of these blood-thirsty beasts.... Until that time no one had seen the Turkish cavalry; coming upon them their strange spectacle was revealed; they were archers, long-haired like women."²⁶

The monk Urhayetsi wrote his *Chronicle* in the city of Urha (Edessa). It covers two hundred years of history which in concept and composition is similar to that of the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes the Confessor.

Urhayetsi's *Chronicle* is divided into three parts. The first part, the history of a century (952-1051), is based upon Byzantine sources and chiefly draws upon Hakob Sanahnetsi's *Chronicle* (eleventh c.). Events of the second part of the work cover the years from 1052 to 1101; and the third from 1102 to 1136. In these last parts, Urhayetsi is a contemporary historian and eyewitness. It must be said that generally he did not use contemporary sources (Shapuh Bagratuni, Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, Stepanos Taronetsi, Aristakes Lastiverttsi), nor did he indicate the sources he did use.

In contrast to other Armenian historians, Urhayetsi did not begin his history from the beginning of time or from ages long past. Although he does not have the most solid intellectual background to undertake such work, he makes an earnest effort to collect and organize a complete record of the peoples, kings, patriarchs, and princes of Armenia in chronological order. He writes the history not of certain Armenian provinces but of all the "Armenian nation" and even treats the lives of Armenian princes living outside of Armenia. With a bitter heart, Urhayetsi tells of the events of those dark times when the Armenian Bagratuni Kingdom collapsed, the Armenians were put to flight, and the Rubinian Kingdom was established. He was aggrieved by the Greeks who undermined his fatherland not only in religious (Chalcedonian) matters but also by sapping the strength of Armenia, depriving the country of its youth and leaders by drawing them to Byzantium. As a consequence, the doors of the defenseless country were left open for Seljuk-Turk destruction.

"Our homeland, rifled from us, was ruined," he writes. "The foundation of the Armenian people's house has crumbled. There is no hope of refuge anywhere, and we have fallen under the yoke of servitude to infidels and foreign brutes."

Urhayetsi's chronology is a carefully studied and prepared work, written with a balanced sense of the historical situation and though it lacks inner continuity, nevertheless, it is not devoid of emotionalism and authorial *Anschaung*. He is a patriotic and passionate historian of his country, people, and traditions. Recording the events mentioned, he nonetheless did not lose hope of "better days" and wished only to leave those pages as a memorial for generations to come.

Urhayetsi writes in the colloquial language of his time, often in choppy and uneven sentences. Yet there are passages in the book about the heroic battles of Prince Khachik and his sons, and the brave acts of Vahram Pahlavuni, King Gagik II, and Gagik Abasian, where eloquent, poetic language is used.

In the *Chronicle* there is valuable historical and political information not only about Armenians but also about neighboring countries—Georgia, Albania, the Arab Caliphate, Byzantium, Egypt, and the Crusaders. Urhayetsi tells about the Crusader kingdoms and principalities established in the Near East, about the founding of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, and about the infiltration of Seljuk-Turks into the Near East. Grigor the Elder updated Urhayetsi's *Chronicle* to 1162/3.

Matteos Urhayetsi's successors and modern historians have drawn upon his *Chronicle* extensively. When Edouard Dulaurier translated Urhayetsi into French and included his work in the first volume of his anthology of Crusader historians under the title "Armenian Documents," Urhayetsi drew the attention of European historians as well.²⁷

Studies of Armenian sources on the Crusades have been published by Félix Nève,²⁸ Heinrich Petermann,²⁹ and René Grousset.³⁰ Urhayetsi's information on the Crusaders is used by Jean Laurent,³¹ by Steven Runciman in his three-volume work on the Crusades,³² Aneliese Lüders,³³ and others.

The historian *SMBAT SPARAPET* (Constable, 1208-1276) was the brother of the Cilician King Hetum I, a diplomat, military leader, legislator, and translator. He wrote *History of the Greeks in Constantinople and of Armenian Leaders*, also known as the *Taregirk* (Annals); a translation of the *Les Assises d'Antioch*, whose French original has not survived; and the lawbook *On the Judgment of Kings* (1265), regarding the ecclesiastical and secular laws of Cilicia.

Smbat Sparapet's *History*, written as a chronicle, covers events from the middle of the tenth century to the end of the twelfth century in Byzantium, during the last years of the Bagratuni Kingdom and the Seljuk-Turk invasions.³⁴ The history of the Rubinian Cilician Kingdom is a thorough account of the re-establishment of Armenian sovereignty, with high praise for the role Levon II and Nerses Lambronatsi played in that noble effort.

Vanakan Vardapet's (Mkhitar Gosh's student) school is among the interesting phenomena at the end of twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries. Its best-known representatives are Vardan Areveltsi and *KIRAKOS GANDZAKETSI*. Gandzaketsi's (1200-1271) *History of the Armenians* covers the Armenians' conversion to Christianity and subsequent events up to the author's lifetime c. 1265.³⁵ The detailed descriptions of Mongol-Tatar invasions and the struggle in the Caucasus have served as reliable sources for researchers and historians. From a historical perspective the treatise is not a systematically comprehensive, inter-connected survey; nevertheless, Gandzaketsi's *History* is a valuable historical and literary legacy, written with plain and perceptive sincerity. In presenting details of the life and ways in thirteenth-century Caucasia, Mongol customs, Asian tribes and the fall of the Arab Caliphate, he relates numerous stories which shed light on the simple beliefs of the medieval mind.

VARDAN AREVELTSI was also called Vardan Metz (the Great), Vardan Gandzaketsi, Aghvanits Vardan, Vardan Patmich (the Historian), Vardan Vardapet (c. 1198-1271). Historian, philosopher, translator, and ecclesiastical activist, he studied in the Tavush monastery. Later, he became a famous figure in Armenian political-religious life. In 1255 he established the seminary school of Khor Virap, where many of the major toilers in medieval Armenian culture were educated.

Vardan Areveltsi bequeathed a rich literary legacy (120 works). In Armenian exegetic literature, his commentaries are of the finest specimens: the collection *Lutzmunk Surb Grots* (Analyses of the Holy Bible), known by the title *Zhghlank*; *Ashkharhatsuits* (Geography); and grammatical tracts. The most valuable of Vardan Arevlets'i's oeuvre is *Havakumn patmutian* (Anthology of History). It is composed of a preface and one hundred chapters. The narrative begins with the building of the Tower of Babel and concludes with the death of the Armenian Catholicos Kostandin Bardzrabetsi in 1267. For this, he made use of

works by Armenian historians, inscriptions, documents, tales, and legends. Especially of interest is his description of historical events in his time, the end of the twelfth century and the thirteenth century. This opus is extremely profitable for scholarship of the Mongol invasion, conquest of the Caucasus, the taxation policies, the Hulavian state, and Armenian-Mongol ties.³⁶

Vardan Areveltsi also wrote speeches and exhortations, *sharakans*,³⁷ and eulogies.

Vardan Areveltsi was venerated by the honorific titles "holy," "famous and profound," "tresmagistus" and others, while his works were copied in great numbers and spread widely.

The role of *HOVHANNES SARKAVAG* (1045/50-1129) was especially significant during this period. He was renowned for his erudition outside Armenia in neighboring countries and was called *Imastaser* ("the philosopher"). He was born in Gandzak into a clerical family, received his education in the foremost Armenian centers of learning in the tenth to twelfth centuries—Haghat and Sanahin—and later moved to Ani and established a school there, where the philosophy of Aristotle, the mathematics of Philo, the *Grammar* of Dionysius Thrax, music, theology, and rhetoric were taught. Here he carried on extensive pedagogic activity and devoted himself to literature and science. Hovhannes Sarkavag penned many scientific, historical, religious, and philosophical studies, which, unfortunately, have not reached us in full.³⁸ Important among these was his *History*, which has survived only in excerpts. Examination of his mathematical study, *On Squared Numbers*, shows that tracts of the Greek mathematicians Pythagoras, Euclid, and Nichomachus had been translated and analyzed in Armenia and a unique Armenian mathematical school had developed parallel to them. Hovhannes Sarkavag also worked on calendrics and in 1084 compiled the Armenian dating system.

Hovhannes Sarkavag was a famed philosopher and was also known by the Greek epithet "*sophestos*." Although his philosophical views are religious and moral in character, they extend beyond the limits of dogmatic thought and touch upon a wide range of philosophical and epistemological issues. As a philosopher, he assigns a large function to experimentation, defending experience as a means to acquire knowledge and espouses not only the "God-inspired scriptures" but also the achievements of "external," Greek and secular learning—a position

which European philosophy reached two hundred years later in the person of Roger Bacon.

Hovhannes Sarkavag's aesthetic theory is presented in his ode "Word of Wisdom," where new concepts of art are expressed. The poem is ranked high in Armenian literature and is considered one of the masterpieces of Armenian poetry.³⁹ This poem, composed of 188 lines, is a philosophical dialogue between a poet and a Finch, examining the interrelationship between art and nature.

In the early Christian centuries, up to and even after Grigor Narekatsi, divine revelation was considered the source of art; that is, God by suggestion or inspiration gave man the capability to create. It is for this reason that the Bible is called "God-inspired writing" in Armenian. Narekatsi had that same attitude when writing his *Book of Lamentations*. Hovhannes Sarkavag, on the other hand, considered not divine revelation but wonders of nature to be the source of creative inspiration. And since the Finch's enchanting song was natural while the skill of artistic creation is learned, he concludes that the source of poetry is nature; that art merely tries to resemble and copy nature, therefore, it is unlike nature, i.e., perfection. These are meditations related to secularization, that is, to the unbridled spirit and ideas of the new times. He tries to explain the means of aesthetic perception of reality, where the main object as the fountainhead of art is nature, while art is based not upon grace granted from on high but upon rationality, and the capacity to perceive the perfect forms and modes of nature. It was a philosophy which ensued from nature and the natural, was more rationalistic and, therefore, closer and more accessible to human beings and their individuality. On the other hand, Hovhannes Sarkavag, in his philosophical and scientific conception, followed Classical Greek views. The Hellenic bent ("*hellenakhohutiun*" in Alishan's word) is the key for Hovhannes Sarkavag, revealing the deep myths of pagan Greek literature, and in its turn, helping him understand the natural power and talent for writing and creating. In his "Word of Wisdom" the traces of Homeric style are evident, where the Armenian iambic meter mimics the metrics of Homeric verse:

O, dancing, untiring and harmoniously chirping,
Whence do you speak in foreign and native tongues?
Come teach me, imperfect pedant that I am, so I might know;

Do not strike me dumb, you singer in syllables,
With seamless voice instruct and accept me as your disciple.
I will repay you for the wisdom you have taught,
I will release an ode to you, following the uncorrupted,
Toward eternal time, undefaceable, ably turned,
Prompting and elegant, for the benefit of the sapient.⁴⁰

The poem is written in expressive and plain language, in rich philosophical lines, endowed with fine lyricism and gentle iambic rhymes.

Hovhannes Sarkavag also authored a series of sacred hymns, which are considered in chapter 7 of the present volume.

9. Grigor Narekatsi

In the tenth to fourteenth centuries, the secularization of ideas and reasoning penetrated the depths of the human psyche. People experienced nearly every sensual pleasure around them—whether it was music, literature, architecture, or human love. And this individualism was reflected both in artistic and literary matters as well as in the many faceted activities of daily life.

Despite the unfavorable political situation, after the twelfth century, the trend toward inner harmony was strong. The development of individualism and self-consciousness looked upon life from a new vantage point and critically approached the established tradition of the Church and the reigning ideology. Gradually, on account of this trend, the religious world view was giving way to rationality. As early as the twelfth century Nerses Shnorhali in his *Universal Encyclical* criticized social classes, princes, and bishops, and Grigor Tgha no longer simply cursed the enemy. Rather, he called for revenge by the Jerusalemites in his *Lament on the Capture of Jerusalem*. This means that the idea of secularization was emerging in people's self-consciousness along with a sober and critical approach to religious and moral values. The mind had already emerged from the bounds of tradition, having as a new basis the imagination of the senses. For this reason, the world of antiquity with its science, philosophy, and art was gaining attention once more.

Also, tendencies toward secularization were once again drawing Armenians toward Hellenic literature and art. Dionysius Thrax once again demanded study, and Homer's name was frequently mentioned by Armenian authors. Greek mythology with its artistic standards and Homer, with his unsurpassed craftsmanship, became objects of emulation.¹

Furthermore, in the tenth through thirteenth centuries new concepts of life and nature emerged. Aesthetics, centered on man and world, assumed new importance. And, although people in those times

appreciated physical beauty, they presented it as the manifestation of the spiritual. God was seen as the Creator of Beauty—a concept which eventually led to the deification of nature in art. And, although nature and the relation of man to nature became more thought provoking, for the medieval mind salvation of the soul was still of primary concern. There was no doubt that this mind-set was affected by the new spirit of the age and by pagan anthropocentrism.

At this time, one of the foremost achievements of the Armenians—the national epic *David of Sasun*—came into existence, as well as fables, riddles, and tales, reflecting popular thought and humor. In lyric poetry, the enshrinement of love and beauty and the troubadour songs, called *hairens*, became widespread.²

Secularization led to an expansion of themes in literature as well. Nature, the rose and nightingale, women and love, images from social life, the life of the exiled wanderer, patriotic and philanthropic ideas became topics in art. Interest in the world and life made the individual human being the hero, whose complete description was given glowing form by Hamam Areveltsi as early as the ninth century:

For I am sublime in spirit,
 With thought rushing forth to heaven,
 An animal sublime like the immortals,
 But bearing the yoke of mortality,
 And ranking after God and the angels,
 I, the rational,
 Both servant and free.

Writers turned to the people and their folklore. New literary forms were appearing. In the tenth to fourteenth centuries, along with hymns, coda-chants (*gandz*), religious interpretations, litanies, and panegyrics, there appeared secular songs, poems, epics, and the entire legacy of popular folklore—fables, proverbs, and sayings.

From the twelfth century on, Middle Armenian, a vernacular accessible to the people, became the literary language. This in itself is testimony to the secularization of literature. Classical Armenian continued to exist alongside Middle Armenian, gradually becoming removed from literature and turning into the language of church services and sacred literature.

These qualities found expression in the work of the most important Armenian writer of the Middle Ages—Grigor Narekatsi, who became the pinnacle of classical Armenian literature and the starting point of medieval Armenian belles lettres. He was a towering figure, who played as prominent a role in Armenian literature as Homer and Dante did in Greek and Italian literatures.

Facts about Narekatsi's life are scanty. He was born between 945-950 in one of the villages of Vaspurakan, into the family of Bishop Khosrov Andzevatsi.³ Grigor spent his youth in the prominent tenth-century monastery of Narek (located on the southern shore of Lake Van), hence his name Narekatsi, or "from Narek." There, Grigor and his brother Hovhannes studied with one of the most eminent minds of the time—the abbot of the monastery, Anania Narekatsi the philosopher, who was their mother's uncle. After completing his education, he became a celibate priest (*vardapet*) and remained in the same monastery.

Narekatsi was of impeccable character and broad knowledge; he was loved and well-known in his own day. But, he was also subject to persecution at the hands of his opponents who accused him of heterodoxy. In the *Haismavurk* (Menologium) we read, "Because he worked with all care to set straight the disrupted order of the Church, various detractors defamed him, calling this Doctor of Truth weak of faith and heretic."⁴ Indeed, Narekatsi's father was excommunicated on similar grounds, while his uncle Anania was suspected of associating with the Tondrakites.

Grigor Narekatsi died in 1003 and was buried in Narek Monastery. His grave became a sacred site of pilgrimage for the Armenian people.

Narekatsi left a rich literary legacy to posterity. Many of his works have reached us. Among them: *Commentary on the Song of Songs of Solomon*, *History of the Cross of Aparan*, *Eulogy on the Holy Cross*, *Eulogy on the Holy Mother of God*, *Eulogy on the Patriarch James of Nisibis*, *Coda-Chant on the Advent of the Holy Spirit*, *Coda-Chant on the Holy Church*, *Coda-Chant on the God-carrying Holy Cross*, etc. A significant number of his chants (ten) and eulogies as well as his *Commentary on the Song of Songs* are works of ordinary religious inspiration. They reflect the spirit of the times and were written according to the literary conventions of the day.

The greatness of Narekatsi's talent and genius is evinced by his odes, twenty in number, and by the most sublime monument of medieval Armenian lyric poetry, his epic, *Book of Lamentations*. While the eulogies and coda-chants were written in accordance with the traditions of ecclesiastic literature and fulfilled the needs of the Church, the odes and the *Book of Lamentations* mark the spirit of the new times: fresh attitudes, new concepts, and a novel understanding of art. It is lyric poetry which is distinct from earlier sacred songs—*sharakans* and didactic writings.

Narekatsi's odes integrate the sacred into the secular. The links of the odes to *sharakans* is so powerful, that their similarity is often striking not only from the point of view of their essence and spiritual inspiration but also in their poetic form, style, allegorical imagery, language. Especially notable are the influences of Movses Khorenatsi's hymns to the Mother of God, the Advent hymns, Blessings, and Magnificats. There is similarity and affinity as well between Narekatsi's odes on the Birth, Resurrection, and Transfiguration and the *sharakans* dedicated to those feast days. Beyond their religious and ecclesiastical import, Armenian sacred songs were first and foremost a school of apprenticeship in the art of poetry and a source of inspiration for Narekatsi. As striking as the links between the *sharakans* and his odes are, their dissimilarities are just as noteworthy. More than any other of his predecessors, Narekatsi's genius sensed the spirit of the times, the mentality of the ordinary man, as well as the role of nature in art. No doubt the folkloristic content made the odes more accessible to the common man. As Gabriel Maré has written, "It is as if the sensual breath of mysticism and echos of latent paganism slip in."⁵ Narekatsi was the first in Armenian literature to express nature in its full texture and color; man was found to be the greatest of nature's adornments. In the poet's conception, nature was the source of being, a constantly changing reality from which flowed life, light, and warmth. Nature, therefore, became the fountainhead of his inspiration. Narekatsi contemplated nature and its marvels with a deep sense of wonderment and emotion. His feelings and impressions were conveyed as glorification, honor, and the honest feelings of an inspired soul—sentiments which the Church frowned upon.

In the relations between man and nature, Narekatsi sought refuge only in God. Divine influence, both pervasive and all-embracing,

were manifested in the creative essence of nature. Narekatsi's "mystic naturalism," the intimate union of man with God through nature, found its origin in the above concept.

The poet directs his entire glorification of nature to God. Hence, the spiritual and human feelings resound unfettered beyond the former traditional mold. This is a lyricism of personal experience and feeling, undulation of the soul given a fresh impetus by creative inspiration. Spring and nature, feminine beauty, and the motifs of love are portrayed in similar inspiration. And, although the subject matter is religious, the inspiration pious, his odes bear the joy of secular life and the vitality of popular lyricism. But with regard to poetic art, Narekatsi's odes are lax compared to his *Book of Lamentations*. The odes are, nevertheless, fresh and possess novel forms. They are joyous songs, where description prevails over subject matter; they do not have inner compositional unity; and their external descriptive form is more charming than their contents. The odes are titled "Epiphany," "Resurrection," "Transfiguration," "Christmas," "Ascension," "Ode to the Raising of the Cross," "Pentecost," and "Forty Infants."

Narekatsi's virtuosity in the art of description clearly appears in "Ode to the Epiphany." In it the author gives the Good News to the world, to the saints, as well as all mankind about Christ's birth and baptism. He also greets opulent and colorful nature, filled with universal love.

Good news to flowers and trees,
 thick with buds, thick with leaves,
 beautifully colored fruit,
 eye-pleasing, sweet-tasting,
 scent of blissful fragrance, variegated bouquet,
 winking adornment of roses and corolla,
 spreading their gold rayed petals,
 grown green with thick foliage.⁶ (p. 467)

In "Ode to Christmas," the universe, adorned by the splendor and miracle of Christ's birth, celebrates the victory of human love. On the one hand this ode celebrates the wondrous meaning of spiritual rebirth; and, on the other, it expresses the charm of nature reverberated

in the worship of love, life, and beauty. It is composed of nine stanzas of which six are given below.

Love, from the amorous cloud,
 strewn woolly in the air,
 drips down droplets of rain.

Love is heralded by love,
 filled with loving ardor,
 it fondly joins with love.

The moon, come to its fullness,
 strolls resplendent, with Venus
 and radiant stars behind it.

In the morning the dew descends,
 on the tips of the new Sion,
 with the sweet sun of the daybreak.

Bearer of spring, mover of spring,
 shining in many colors,
 it turns into a wedding.

Come, let us also rejoice,
 sparkling and frolicking,
 becoming leaves for the bush. (p. 464)

The Holy Virgin is the incarnation of striking beauty in the ode "Melody for the Birth." In this work, similar to secular songs of praise, Narekatsi composes Mary's glowing countenance, her adornments, and raiment—an image reminiscent of the bright colors of popular songs and resembling the lively and earthy woman rather than the figure of Mother of God, bearer of the virtues of goodness and holiness. In his description of the ideal feminine beauty, Narekatsi reminds us of the beloved Madonna of Renaissance art, which served as the source of eternal inspiration for Italian painting and architecture, giving rise to its most celebrated masterpieces (Raphael, Giovanni Bellini, Rubens, Titian, Boticelli).

Her sea-like eyes unfold
 upon the frolicking sea of the morn,
 like two radiant suns;
 the rays descend like morning light.

While from her cheeks like fall blossoms
 of pomegranate and oleander,
 for which her heart sparingly
 bubbles forth amber-glowing love.

Hands delicately tied in an arch,
 she sang fanciful and enchanting.

Weaving up and down together,
 she moved forth calmly and walked gracefully.

Her mouth of two petals, rose dripped from her lips;
 her tongue mellifluous like a harp.

While the curly waves of her hair shone in beauty
 from that same love, color of wine.

And the hair was adorned and adorned,
 braided in three, circling the cheeks.

Her bosom shone with light, filled with red roses,
 arms like a bouquet of purple violets.

Fragrant like a censer of frankincense filled by divine fire;
 a melodious voice sounded forth from her.

A beautiful cloak adorned her,
 in blue, purple, and flowing lace,
 glowing with the color of gold. (p. 465)

Manuk Abeghian writes:

Thus from the very beginning in our poetry, much earlier than the Europeans, the image of a woman was placed in mystic wonder, approached by the poet with deep reverence and spiritual admiration. The poet, much like the troubadour in his songs, describes in luxurious images of glorified earthly love—as indeed he could not have done otherwise; but, he uses these descriptions only as a means of making the object of his spiritual admiration more sensual. In addition, he does this in a refined, noble, and pure way. The poet furthermore makes a brilliant sketch of the ideal woman, which thereafter dominates our poetry and love songs. This indeed was an indication that poetry was being transformed.⁷

Narekatsi links “Ode to Vardavar” (Transfiguration) with the pagan holiday of the same name, exhibiting refined poetic imagination and capabilities.

This festively celebrated holiday in pre-Christian Armenia became in the Christian era the feast of Christ’s Transfiguration and kept its pagan name. Narekatsi’s Vardavar is a palpable and moving, luxurious and living description of nature, filled with rays and mist, a glorification of the sun and bright flowers.

The bejeweled rose took flame
from the grand mane of the sun.
Up and above that mane
spread the azurine lea.
From the expansive sea
the color of that flower glistened,
In the shade of iridescent flowers
the fruits shone on the bough.
The saffron-toned syrupy fruit
was nourished by the lush leaves;
The leaves of the Giver of the harp,
of which the wonderful David sang.
From the garland of profuse posies,
flowers multi-hued bloomed;
Those pine and bonwood trees
spread out roseate shoots. (p. 482)

In "Ode to Vardavar" the words are chosen with special taste, utilizing alliterations which create a charming mixture of sound and color. Thus:

tzavaler tzaghik tzovayin ...

*Shushanen shogher hovtin,
Shoghshogher dem aregakann.*

The poem comprises eight quatrains, in which every two lines contains seven or eight syllables of mixed iambic and anapestic meter. This ode, as opposed to others, is not laden with adjectives and prepositions, which makes it smooth and sonorous.

Narekatsi's "Ode to the Resurrection," composed of sixty-five lines of eight to eleven syllables each, is endowed with imagery similar to Renaissance art. This is an allegorical scene, in which a wagon is descending Mt. Ararat, loaded with flax-covered chairs and golden thrones. Christ is seated upon the wagon, surrounded by seraphim and cherubim, and ahead are beautiful children singing Psalms, harps in hand and praising Jesus. The above tableau represents Solomon's temple. Indeed, the author draws his vision from the Bible as well as from the architectural marvels of the cathedral and palaces of Aghtamar. The ornate wagon, whose "yoke is golden," "shaft is silver," "axle of silk," and "reins made of a multitude of strung pearls," does not move until the "versatile" and "strong armed" youth calls and cries out to the white flower-bedecked oxen. Only then does the wagon budge.

Man, in his natural characteristics and essence, is manifest in the "fair-complexioned, bold, broad-shouldered" model of the youth, which although incarnate in the biblical person of John the Baptist, nevertheless, resounds with the spirit of the age and times. The poem, as an allegory, has clearly a religious meaning, consonant with theological art and symbolism (the wagon represents Moses's *Deuteronomy*; the hundred orchids, the prophets; the six grasses, God's six days' labor). Yet the description is so colorful and lively that the breath of life and the heaving of nature become almost palpable.

The insight of religious subject matter in Narekatsi is usually displayed with powerful images and sublime sentiments as well as novel expressive devices, neologisms, and a multitude of rhetorical and

stylistic techniques of his own invention. Although the odes are not rhymed, they are written with a refined sense of meter. The language, seasoned with adjectives, epithets, and similes, in general reinforces the brightness of the picture but is sometimes weighed down by redundant and arcane words. The richness of his rhetorical devices bears the influence of classical Greek and flamboyant Arabic poetic styles, both prevalent in Narekatsi's time. According to a more recent scholar of Narekatsi's art, Varag Arakelian, his odes have not reached us in their original form; they have been subjected to considerable alterations. Indeed, Arakelian uncovered in these odes vocabulary, grammatical and metrical turns posterior to the poet's time. "Some of the odes," he writes, "are reworked and reshaped verbally, in the manner of plebian songs and popular grammatical and terminological modes."⁸

Narekatsi's greatness is evidenced in its full philosophical depth in *Book of Lamentations*, also well-known as *Narek*. According to Narekatsi's colophons, the work was completed in 1002, one year before the author's death. It is a book of prayers and spirituality, written at the request of fellow monks. It has an extensive title and is composed of ninety-five chapters, numbered I to VC, and a colophon.

Book of Lamentations is a work of verse. Narekatsi himself considered it "song of lament," although the manuscript copies are in prose format. In the twentieth century it was scanned into lines, printed in poetic form, and called "epos" (long poem). One finds in it also prose passages (chapters 34, 75, 92, 93, and a colophon), with dogmatic or hermeneutic content. Nearly two hundred manuscript copies of *Book of Lamentations* have reached us in various conditions (complete, incomplete, and excerpted). The author's original manuscript has not been preserved, and there are no copies from the eleventh century either. The oldest manuscript dates back to 1173. *Narek* is the most frequently published book in Armenian literature; it has had over sixty printings.⁹

Book of Lamentations is the most noteworthy and valuable work of medieval Armenian literature; it is the most widespread text after the Psalter and the New Testament. Narekatsi's masterpiece has been compared with the Bible and has served as a source of religious inspiration and profound poetic experience. So great has been the faith in the power and influence of *Narek* that it was considered a miraculous book. Perhaps no other work in Armenian literature has earned such high praise and undergone so much critical scrutiny as *Narek*.

Why is this work the object of so much veneration among Armenians, and what are its philosophical and literary roots?

The main axis of the poem is the question of man's fate, the salvation of his soul. As a mortal, man at his birth is spotless but through life's experiences becomes corrupted and sinks into the abyss of sin. However, man is conscious of sin and fears destruction; therefore, in order to escape eternal perdition, he repents before God and confesses his transgressions. Salvation is reached through repentance, the shedding of sin. It follows that in order to regain his original purity and save mankind, Narekatsi unsparingly condemns his sins and stands spiritually naked before God. This lyric work is devoid of any plot, but it has inner unity. Before each chapter, except for two (92, 93) and the colophon, the title, "From the depths of the heart, words unto God," is repeated. Although the manuscript was copied a great many times, the recurrent title was not edited out by copyists. Subtitles were later added out of the practical need to make the contents more accessible.

For the author, living in a religious milieu and within the confines of a biblical and spiritual atmosphere, worldly vanity and a deep concern about the final judgment were a constant preoccupation. And this gave impetus to the expansion of the poem and posed in all its sharpness the question of man's salvation. Narekatsi comes forth here in the name of sinful man, sits in the defendant's chair, and attempts to justify and advocate man's rights.

The tenth century, in which the poet lived, was a striking period for the complexity of its intellectual, economic, and spiritual conditions. On the one hand there was deep rooted medieval mysticism, and on the other, there were the emerging spirit and ideas of the new times. These two world views wound up in assuming a conflictual posture. And no matter how much the new secular concepts and sensibilities affected art, still, culture in its entirety remained in a spiritual vein; the preeminent artistic inspiration was religious. And despite the manifestation of pagan art, faith toward God remained unshaken deep within man.

Being formed of body and soul, man was in eternal struggle between these two elements, because according to Christian doctrine, it was necessary to deny the body, the worldly, and the natural, giving preeminence to the spirit by renouncing the material world. From this tension, between soul and body is born tragedy, which becomes the subject of lyric poetry.¹⁰

Gaze thou, O Lord, with compassion
Upon the image of bitter afflictions
Of the most dangerous passions and vices,
Which I spread out before thee.
Be a participant as with a physician,
And do not cite me for questioning as with a judge.
Verily great is the peril of the anguish
Arising from this indecision and bewilderment,
When the body is confiscated by transgressions,
And the soul is not isolated from evil acts:
When the instrument is fettered with vicious habits,
And the structure is cemented with mortal passions:
When the heart's sensitivity is pierced by remorse,
When the expectation of goodness is totally lifted,
And though amongst rationals, yet classed as a beast,
And nauseous disgust is entwined with the being:
When outwardly healthy, yet spiritually wounded,
And ever desperate at the memory of serious sins ... (Elegy 23,

b)

Because God loves man, He gave him free will. But this itself has impelled man towards evil and sin. According to divine command, in order to be cleansed, man needs to repent, to confess his transgressions and purge his soul of all macula. Being aware of all that corrupts man's original essence, Narekatsi considers himself a wrecked and abandoned soul, whom the sense of sin unnerves and forces to be spiritually convulsed, condemning himself.

No one is as sinful as I,
No one as unlawful, no one as irreverent,
No one as unjust, no one as evildoing,
No one as faulted, no one as wrong,
No one as wild, no one as fraudulent,
No one so sullied, no one as shameful, no one as condemned;
I alone, and no one else,
I am all, and in everyone's. (Elegy 72, c)

The genesis of tragedy can be traced to Narekatsi's attempt to approach God and to condemn himself for real or imaginary sins—in a word, to receive forgiveness. The consciousness of sin born of the clash between good and evil confronts him with introspective psychological examination and grave travail, painfully reliving each moment of the self-flagellation of his being,

Now, I beseech thee, who art the guardian of souls
 Afflicted by the sorrow of perilous and painful passions.
 Do not augment the suffering of my lamentations;
 Do not injure me, who am wounded;
 Do not condemn me, who am punished;
 Do not torment me, who am tortured;
 Do not scourge me, who am beaten;
 Do not trip me over, who have fallen;
 Do not destroy me, who have stumbled;
 Do not reject me, who have moved away;
 Do not banish me, who am persecuted;
 Do not put me to shame, who am bashful;
 Do not reprimand me, who am frightened;
 Do not crush me, who am shattered ... (Elegy 17, a)

So powerful is this flood of the soul's confession and so sincere the plea for forgiveness, that the work's tragic bathos reaches extreme intensity.

The consciousness of sin and eternal perdition constantly jolts the poet, crushes his being, mind, and existence. And as he pours forth from the pressure of sin, the transgressions seem to him "innumerable"; he is tossed and lashed, without interruption, stubbornly trying to become worthy of the forgiveness of the Most High. Narekatsi's sinful soul feels and sees its mortal frailty, the unreachableness, sublimity, and exaltedness of the Creator.

Unto thee hast thou assigned justice, O benefactor,
 And unto me hast thou granted shame and bashfulness;
 Unto thee, worthy glory,
 And unto me, fitting dishonor;
 Unto thee, a memory of sweetness,

And unto me, the vinegary bile of expiration;
Unto thee, unceasing laudation,
And unto me, plaintive cries of lamentation;
Unto thee, worshipful songs of benediction,
And unto me, expulsion of banishment;
Unto thee, meritorius rights,
And unto me, the most perplexing responsibilities;
Unto thee, exaltations of ineffable praise,
And unto me, the degrading penalty of licking ash. (Elegy 20, c)

God is merciful, compassionate, and good. This is the author's comforting conclusion and hope of salvation. In order to be worthy of God's clemency, he opens his distressed and bloodied heart; seeking forgiveness he flagellates, reproaches, accuses, and mocks himself. The suffering author, who seeks to renounce the world and human desires, and also to embrace eternity, evokes deep emotions. Out of this arise the inexhaustible outpourings of his benevolent soul, contemplating the world's vanity and man's weakness and imperfection. In turn, this acts as an effective agent of his lyrical sentiments.

I, impatient, and of skeptical nature,
Feet unsure, and mind feeble,
Passions compelling, and ways intemperate,
Body curdled with sin, and desire worldly,
Battle a companion of mine, and a being discordant,
Dwelling place of clay, and rains powerful,
Needs unnumerable, and accidents all-encompassing,
Mind nurturing evil, and desires despising good,
Life of short days, and a few afflictions,
Deceit of foolishness, and childish toy ... (Elegy 55, e)

The medieval concept of duality, the opposition of mind and body, and whether the soul should have primacy over the body or vice versa poses a thorny problem for Narekatsi. The conflict between these two distinctly human components embitters him as he attempts to reconcile the dichotomy of mind and body. Narekatsi reaches the conclusion that, while the body is of divine creation, the soul or spirit is of divine grace.

Narekatsi's lament is not individual but for all mankind, thus giving the poem universal reverberation. From the sobs of personal pain and suffering, he reaches the issues of the future of humanity, drowning in a sea of sin, and places his personal grief in a social content, reaching great literary universality.

Drowning brigand, deceitful soldier,
 Unready combatant, soldier without weapon,
 Lazy field-worker, suppliant discouraged,
 Creeping cleric, priest without incense,
 Talentless exemplar, scribe reproached,
 Crazy pedant, deformed rhetorician,
 Impudent figure, unabashed visage, lewd face,
 Unappealing color, inhumane model, disgraceful beauty,
 Rotten meat, disgusting taste,
 Vineyard overrun with weeds, vines covered with worms,
 Garden of thorns, worm-eaten ears of grain,
 Honey fed upon by mice,
 Indefensible fallen, boaster desperate,
 Unspeakable curse, irreconcilably separated,
 Vain chatterer, conniving braggart,
 Wicked brute, hellishly stingy, unbridled lewdness,
 Ungodly vice, murderous attempt,
 Farmer of thorns, miserable happiness ... (Elegy 56, a)

On the other hand, this is a portrayal of reality as he lived it, a faithful reflection of the times, in objectively bringing out the defining characteristics of each social class, from nobility to plebes.

This state of the world and existence, man's relations with his fellow-men brought Narekatsi to despair; he viewed existence with fear and uncertainty. However, no matter how far beyond consolation the state of human society and life are, nevertheless, it is difficult for man, by his own will, to renounce the world and unite with the Creator. This is the *tragedy*, the inevitability of death, which hounds man, forces him to love life and to embrace it. Narekatsi finds it natural for man living on earth to have insatiable desire for life and human frailties. And from this flows forth the tragic depth that the author through forceful poetic

pathos expresses grief and fear and, as the French poet Luc-André Marcel writes, demands "the right to live."¹¹

Book of Lamentations is a quest for the human soul, in its multifaceted manifestations. One finds in it nature, with its elements and phenomena, whose center is man. With his entire essence the lyricist Narekatsi suffers the fate of man and like a volcano erupting, sometimes spews forth to the Highest in awe of His greatness and power; and at other times with heart-rending sighs of confession he annihilates himself, like a representative particle of miserable mankind. This effort to approach the soul is transformed into a cry and has dampened the pages of *Narek* with tears for centuries on end, making it a holy book to comfort the grief-stricken. *The boundless love of God and inestimable faith are Narekatsi's strength*, which, deeply conscious of man's weakness, moves back and forth, from the unsightly to the beautiful, from evil toward the inestimable good.

Narekatsi is a mystic poet. His poetic outbursts are an expression of both spiritual and introspective disposition and not of the external or sensitive. A divine mystery radiates in his being, and he, burning from that warmth, throws himself toward the infinite. The poetic subject, the images, language, and the harmony of all the parts spring forth from the divine love and faith in which Narekatsi's mind and soul are immersed. This psychological predisposition serves the poet as raw material on which he constructs his book infused with the breath of God.

Narekatsi's work is not replete with the symbolism of the immaterial realm, characteristic of mystic authors, but with the powerful feelings of a living and breathing man, exhibiting great love of life and restlessness regarding the future. Narekatsi is a man with a tragic soul; his person is defined by cheerful as well as dark thoughts, by sharp sensitivity and imagination in experiencing the world and life. And it is here that his ability to penetrate, to touch, and to feel evokes admiration for his critical and unique style. The ups and downs and wanderings of the soul, which in one instance tell of the unravelling of unrealized dreams, in another instance, the awareness of being unable to reach God's perfection, incline Narekatsi toward suffering, which harbors profound mystery.

The problem of salvation of the soul, the main issue of the book, arises from the author's great love for mankind, his noble desire to see man cleansed and perfected.

At the end of *Book of Lamentations* his soul calms down out of the resplendent hope of salvation and demonstrates the author's optimism. Such optimism arises from the profound tragedy which Narekatsi experienced on account of man's fate.

Righteous sun, blessed ray,
Form of light, desire of anxiety,
Exalted beyond understanding, powerful beyond words,
Bliss of good, vision of hope ... (Elegy 95, a)

Book of Lamentations, in Armenian as well as international literature, is noteworthy first and foremost for its deep and all-embracing vision. This singular creation, as early as the eleventh century, presents the real man with high literary standards, examining from many angles the complex feelings and experiences of the human soul long ignored.

Narekatsi reveals deep discernment and subtlety in carrying out his analysis of the nature and inner world of man. Laying bare the errors of man's ways, he characterizes the reality of his age and the psychology of contemporary mankind, its flaws and weaknesses, toward which he is filled with boundless anger. This is the fate of man, a fate which torments Narekatsi, who yearns to see people virtuous and perfect; Narekatsi seeks to bring man as a strong and good individual closer to God and searches God in man. "Perhaps," writes the poet Luc-André Marcel, "it seems to some that *Book of Lamentations* is monotonous, heavy, or quaint. But its monotony is the monotony of a continually heroic effort or lovelorn longing to reach the unreachable desire; the heaviness is the heaviness of grief, indecision, and regret; and the quaintness is his life. For Narekatsi existence is most important. And his poem opens a path through universal death toward eternal being."¹²

By dwelling upon the conflict between life and death, whence Narekatsi's mysticism, the enigmas of the universe and the mystery of eternity are explained and directed toward the philosophical depths of the infinite.

What relation does man have with eternity? Is man's soul capable of communing with the eternal and the universe, which are governed by Providence? These thoughts, which raised in the author's soul waves of anxiety and mental anguish, at times lighted the hope of

salvation and at other times despair and torment or, conversely, happiness . . .

Two cups, in two hands,
 One of blood, the other of milk,
 Two censer boxes alit,
 One with incense, the other with grease,
 Two plates bearing flavors,
 One sweet, the other bitter ...
 Two kinds of faces,
 One sad, and the other angry,
 Two reproaches instead of one,
 One of the present, the other of the future;
 Two refuges of thought,
 One *at least*, the other *perhaps*;
 In one mouth two utterings,
 One misery, one uneasiness,
 Two signs of the heart,
 One wavering hope, the other definite perdition....
 (Elegy 30, c)

Comparing Dante and Narekatsi, Mkrtich Mkrian writes, "... In the sense of turning the human inner life into a creative subject, Narekatsi surpasses Dante and approaches Shakespeare. While in Dante the tragic, reflecting life's circumstances, was mostly expressed through the depiction of the hero's external and physical torment, in Narekatsi it is presented in the complex and conflictual inner psychological experiences of man."¹³

Book of Lamentations does not have a national character. It is a universal work, universalizing the Christian human soul. But, "... if *Narek* seems less Armenian in its elements, by psychology it is pure Armenian," writes Yeghishe Vardapet about the poem. "Difficult historical conditions and external oppression forced the Armenian to direct his eyes to heaven, to the Higher Power. *Narek* is the capsized Armenian epic in the form of lament and prayer."¹⁴

The profound ideology of *Book of Lamentations* is expressed by a variety of literary devices and originality. Of course, the uses of these techniques arise from the contents of the poem itself, the abundance and

overflow of emotions and passions, and the fluctuations of spiritual conditions and outpourings, with which the whole *Narek* is inundated.

The vividness of imagery as well as the poetic inventions, which flow forth with great rapidity and elemental eruptions, sometimes render the poem difficult to understand, losing its clarity and simplicity. However, generally, the torrent of Narekatsi's thoughts runs parallel with his feelings. His passions, experiences, and logic are expressed by means of his own individual emotions; although at times the thought has difficulty following the emotion and vice versa.

Generally, the torments of Narekatsi's soul are described in somber hues, in desperate feelings, and depiction of terrifying phenomena. The reflection on imperfections of the world which he saw and knew and the degrading aspects of life bear the grave colors of the poet's disposition and inner spiritual condition. The depiction and analysis of life by Narekatsi—man in his essence and experience, the world with its various phenomena and objects—are so real and true, that Narekatsi astounds by his insight and realistic views. He looks upon the world and reality with the accumulated experience of a man who has lived fully. And when the broad profile of one who recognizes and realizes is complemented by the poetic genius of the feeling soul, then Narekatsi's turbulent being, with its painful undulations and striving toward infinity, infect the reader and communicate to him the same emotions and anxiety.

Narekatsi was deeply influenced by the Bible—its style as well as its language. Theological images, stories, words, and expressions have the Bible as a source, yet bear the stamp of the author's individuality.

The ideas of contrition and repentance as well as the depiction of the last judgment, which are the foundations of Christianity, served for centuries as themes for Armenian spiritual songs. Hundreds of hymns were written on these topics; Narekatsi himself was deeply affected by them. Not only the idea but also the intensity of emotion, especially in *sharakans* of repentance, the *Voghormias* (Mercy), greatly stirred him and were transformed into expressions of personal experience. Indeed, strong traces of the *Voghormias* of Mesrob Mashtots are evident in *Book of Lamentations*. Also significant is the presence of elements of folklore, especially the use of style and content of dirges.

One of the unique features of Narekatsi's work is the prevailing conflict between the author and God or within himself, or between man and nature. The state of opposition between God and man impels the author to bring into sharper focus the contradictions which exist between them, thus making the differences between man weighed down by worldly sins and God in the immaculate heavens even more striking. And this sharpening intensifies the emotion and experience, making a deep impression on the reader. Man's inner world is also full of contradiction, jolted by opposing feelings and sensations ("Today pure soul-bearer, and tomorrow wandering fool; I appear rich at the rising of the sun and in the evening linger empty ...").

The author uses numerous narrative and stylistic devices to avoid repeating the same literary techniques and to make each spiritual condition or opposing event expressive. Other such poetic means are metaphor and simile which add emotional stress and subtlety, lyricism and communicative force.

Let not me conceive and not give birth,
Lament, but not shed tears,
Ponder, but not sigh,
Become cloudy, but not rain,
Strive, but not reach ...

Narekatsi likens the ebb and flow of his soul to the swelling sea, which appears like a picturesque image in the shipwreck episode, when the author with his shattered soul weaves "this memorial of lamentation" similar to the captain who views the wreckage of his sunken ship strewn upon the waves of the sea.

Other metaphors and similes are also based upon real life images. Similarly, the depths of the author's spiritual flights and boundless imagination are expressed as wild elements and phenomena of nature, reaching palpability, and at times utter exaggeration:

For if I were to transform
The waters of some sea into ink,
And were to stretch out a breadth of parchment
Unto the limits of expansive fields,
And if I were to cut into pens

A groveful of reeds from some forest,
 I should not be able to confine in writing
 But a number of mine accumulated iniquities!
 Indeed, if, as an instrument of justice,
 I were to unite all the cedars of Lebanon
 To fashion them into the beam of one balance,
 And if I were to place in its scale Mount Ararat
 In the entirety of its grandeur
 Even then, it would not equate them in equivalence! (Elegy 9, a)

Whether it be psychological states or religious outpourings, Narekatsi expresses himself in an elevated style. Indeed, no other way was possible. Beginning in the seventh century, writers resorted to complex rhetorical devices and continued to write in this manner until the ninth and tenth centuries. This writing style reached the level of over-complexity, although its real purpose was to adorn written language with eloquence and excessive pomp.

Additionally, Narekatsi's style is profoundly individual since his turn of phrases, expressions, the consistent use of variety, his epithets, contrasts, comparisons, are for the most part his own and are not borrowed. His style is not like that of the Bible, since the Holy Book has a plain narrative, which Narekatsi's turbulent soul was not inclined to imitate. Nevertheless, the Bible inspired him a great deal. Indeed, he often borrows words and expressions from the Holy Scriptures, but always indirectly and with alterations.

Narekatsi always includes in the topical sentence the word which he wishes to emphasize, in order to keep euphony and balance. And he constantly changes the main and secondary components of a syntactic unit, the order of the parts of speech, the timbre of sound, and thus creates rhetorical parallelism and repetition. Thus:

I erred, I became alienated,
 I was foolish, I was defeated, and found vile;
 I was abandoned, I was wanting, and I was destroyed,
 I strayed, I betrayed myself, I was rejected.

Ե՛ս վրիպեցայ, ե՛ս օտարացայ,
 Ե՛ս յիմարեցայ, պարտեցայ եւ խոտան գտայ.

Ե՛ս լքայ, կամեցայ, եւ կործանեցայ,
 Ե՛ս մոլորեցայ, ե՛ս մատնեցայ, ե՛ս մերժեցայ . . .

He changes:

There is not your finger in this evil,
 Who are alone unchanging good.

And he changes again:

Now, with your will upon me, and the darkness for me a ray,
 Where the light of your lamp, and the night a dawn ...
 (Elegy 65, e)

The transitions are thus smoother and not boring. This effective device helps Narekatsi to express his ever-changing disposition and mind, passing from a state of high intensity to a calm and enchanted one. The phonological similarity of the endings, which creates balanced rhythmic series, gives the poem's lines its euphony. For example,

*Ail yes anpitans hamenaini,
 Yev vorkan ban zavre parsavials,
 Vor minchder artuns em nirhem,
 Minchder zgast yerevim tmbrim,
 I barepashtels imum gaitakghim,
 Minchder aghavtems yev vripim ... (Elegy 70, b)*

Այլ ես անպիտանս յամենայնի,
 Եւ որքան բան զաւրէ՝ պարսաւեալս,
 Որ մինչդեռ արթունս եմ՝ նիրհեմ,
 Մինչդեռ զգաստ երեւիմ՝ թմբրիմ,
 Ի բարեպաշտելս իմում՝ գայթակղիմ,
 Մինչդեռ աղաւթեմս՝ եւ վրիպիմ . . . (Բան ՀԱ. բ)

In the text of *Book of Lamentations* one also finds sentences beginning in the interrogative, such as why? what? who? perhaps? is it possible? if? how much? whence? (*ender, zinch, ov, ardeok, itse, yete, vorkan, usti*).

The limited topic which Narekatsi deals with is unique by means of these techniques of presentation and does not try the reader's patience by numerous repetitions. Using syntactic variety, the poet keeps his style fresh and finds new words or a new image for comparison. Sometimes, from metrical constructions Narekatsi passes to simple sentences, free from linguistic floridity.

For these sighs of grieving lament,
In many forms of composition,
Have mercy upon all souls ...
And those as well,
For whom the hope of salvation is cut off,
Who fell into eternal sleep unprepared,
With extinguished lamps for lack of oil.

*End aisr harachanats takhtzutian voghbots
I bazmats kerpits sharakargelots
Yev amenits hogvots voghormia...
Nayev ainotsik aravel
Vorots hatial e aknkalutium prkutian kenats,
Vork nnjetsin anpatrastabar
Shijial lapteravk iughuin pakasutian. (Elegy 86, a)*

Ընդ այսր հառաչանաց թախծութեան ողբոց
Ի բազմաց կերպից շարակարգելոց
Եւ ամէնի՛ց հոգւոց ողորմեա . . .
Նաեւ այնոցի՛կ առաւել՝
Որոց հատեալ է ակնկալութիւն Փրկութեան կենաց,
Որք ննջեցին անպատրաստաբար՝
Շիջեալ լապտերաւք իւղոյն պակասութեան: (Բան 22. ա)

Passing from the simple to the complex and from complex to simple syntactic constructions, Narekatsi exhibits a very high degree of linguistic taste and stylistic sensitivity, although the crowded outpouring of ideas sometimes loses coherence, and a break between form and content ensues.

Among the literary achievements of *Book of Lamentations* is its wide variety of metrical techniques and innovative linguistic means.

This is a work of prose, except for a couple of chapters, which have strict metrical structure and sonority. By metrical is meant the repetition of units of equal size, which follow a regular pattern. Rhyme, alliteration, and assonance are also important for meter. For example,

For yours is salvation, (*prkutiun*)
 And from you is remission, (*kavutiun*)
 And by your right hand is renewal, (*norogutiun*)
 And by your finger strength, (*zorutiun*)
 And by your command justice. (*ardarutiun*)

Narekatsi is the first Armenian poet to use both rhymed and unrhymed poetic language, which only one hundred and fifty years later would become established and further developed by Nerses Shnorhali in its multiple possibilities. Narekatsi also used various meters, among which can be counted iamb-anapestic two-, three- and four-part meters, and mixed poetic meters, rhymed and unrhymed, with different numbers of syllables. A case in point is the following:

Bzhshkia zhratap/ jermnakan tochorumn/ mghdzkial srtis,
Merzhia zdivayin/ charahnarutians shshuk/ ko partavoris,
Halatzia zhusahat andzkutian/ hogvuis mtutium/ chari kenaktsis
 ... (Elegy 40, c)

Բժշկեա՛ զհրատապ/ ջերմնական տոչորումն՝/ մղձկեալ
սրտիս,
Մերժեա՛ զդիւային/ չարահնարութեանս շշուկ՝/ քո
պարտաւորիս,
Հալածեա՛ զյուսահատ անձկութեան/ հոգւոյս
մթութիւն/ չարի կենակցիս . . . (Բան Խ. Գ)

Or, the two-part rhyme:

Megha yerakhtiatsd moratsutian,/ verstin megha,
Megha ar kiansd dzhroghutian,/ isk yev isk megha,
Megha banid apakht arnelo,/ charachar megha ... (Elegy 27, e)

Մեղա՛յ երախտեացդ մոռացութեան,/ վերստին մեղայ,

Մեղա՛յ առ կեանսդ դժրողութեան,/ իսկ եւ իսկ մեղայ,
 Մեղա՛յ բանիդ ասպախտ առնելոյ,/ չարաչար մեղայ . . .
 (Բան ի է. ե)

Or:

Yete lvitses/ harachem,
Yete unkn matutsanitses/ paghatim,
Yete ansaitses/ aghersem,
Yete nerestses/ aghachem,
Yete ar is darnaitses/ gochem ... (Elegy 27, h)

Եթէ լուիցես՝/ հառաչեմ,
 Եթէ ունկն մատուցանիցես՝/ պաղատիմ,
 Եթէ անսայցես՝/ աղերսեմ,
 Եթէ ներեցես՝/ աղաչեմ,
 Եթէ առ իս դառնայցես՝/ գոչեմ . . . (Բան ի է. ը)

To build this sublime monument, which presents man's multifaceted psyche and abilities as well as the grave state of his soul and its eruptions, Narekatsi uses all of his linguistic resources. In this sense, he is a builder of language and introduces many neologisms into the lexical inventory of Armenian, which have since attained semantic stability. The following is an example of such words: *ankendan* (lifeless), *anberri* (fruitless), *yegherergutium* (tragic-ode), *takhtzagin* (most-grievous), *bazmimast* (poly-semantic), *diurapes* (facilely), *banasteghtzutium* (poetry), *hamarotumn* (abridgement), *hamaparpak* (all-embracing), *gtzagrakan* (sketching), *lusabanel* (shed light upon), *khrokhtadzain* (proud-voiced), *shnchaspar* (breathless), *meghmution* (mildness), *verjnakan* (final), etc. In creating neologisms Narekatsi used a variety of affixes, suffixes, the compounding of roots, often copying the example of Hellenophile Armenian. "The great number of newly coined words," writes Varag Arakelian, "the use of rare words, proper names, and metaphors from the Bible, Hellenophile formations, and the accumulation of synonyms make Narekatsi's language grand and majestic, affective and miraculous for his contemporaries."¹⁵

Book of Lamentations comprises about 7,000 words.¹⁶ Narekatsi puts these terms into use by means of absolute syntactic mastery. The

selection of phrases, the variety of meanings, the wealth of syntactic forms, and the various paraphrases are always skillfully executed. And if he had not mastered these, then he could only with great difficulty have achieved the level of emotional and musical poetic language he accomplished in his work. This was indeed the first large-scale literary work, which in terms of its aesthetics and thematic wealth, lead Armenian literature to new heights, refined taste, augmented lexical inventory, depth in thinking, and skill in literary language.

Book of Lamentations has had as great an influence upon Armenian literature of the Middle Ages as upon modern Armenian letters. For centuries *Narek* has served as a source of spiritual and poetic inspiration for Armenian writers. It is a book of prayer and a sublime literary creation, whose influence and fame are explained by its peerless literary quality and by the great faith and piety the work is permeated with. *Book of Lamentations* has been translated into French, Russian, and in part, into English and Romanian.

10. Nerses Shnorhali

As a direct consequence of war and persecution, a substantial number of Armenians fled their ancestral homeland in Greater Armenia and took refuge in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, founded in the eleventh century. It was in this geographical area that the Catholicosate of Sis was located and where many monasteries and monastic schools were established (Hromkla, Drazark, Skevra, Lambron, Tarsus). The learned men of Greater Armenia as well as nearly all the scholars in Cilicia of literary and artistic talent settled in these institutions. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these centers flourished and there ensued a period of fervent activity which holds an important place not only in the history of Armenian literature but also of Armenian art in general.

From Armenia came many individuals, who studied and became well acquainted with the ideas and culture which were found in this crossroad between Europe and the East, remarkable for the Western tastes and mores it had absorbed and for its mixture of European and traditional Armenian ways of thinking. Its growing cities, trade, commerce and lively interaction with neighboring countries gave rise in Cilicia to a modern and worldly populace.

In Greater Armenia strict religious and traditional practices were still observed because the major spiritual centers (Haghbat, Sanahin) were cut off from international contacts. In Cilicia, with its direct communication with the West, every possible effort was being made to evade the Eastern traditionalist environment and make contact with the West by way of establishing cultural, social, and commercial links. As a result, the rigid religious mentality was shattered; the monastic mind-set became obsolete. A trend toward accepting life in all of its multifaceted aspects was visible; art had assumed more intimate ties with the contemporary and nature. Hovhannes Sarkavag's theory was that art should relate to the natural and be linked to nature. One of the first to apply this theory was Nerses Shnorhali, whose major

writings reflected the theme of nature. His poem *Haghags yerkni yev zarduts nora* (On Heaven and Its Adornments) is dedicated to it. In addition he wrote numerous riddles, hymns, prose and verse works drawing on images of nature from folk tales and sayings.

Perhaps it was inevitable that in these centuries Armenian lyric poetry had to be religious in nature. This was a period when the medieval mind could hardly separate art from moral instruction. But in many instances, piety was manifested through feelings of highly artistic expressions, and religious poetry sometimes reached, through tragic human experience, biting charm.

National self-consciousness, which arose along with religious fervor, often awoke patriotism and national sentiments, leading to the creation of such masterpieces as Shnorhali's epic *Voghb Yedesio* (Lament for Edessa). Writers felt freer to express their own ideas. The physical—man with his wordly desires and feelings—claimed its rightful place beside the mystical yearnings of the soul and the hereafter. And it is not surprising that, on the one hand, dogmatic works and religious poetry (*sharakans*, poems, epics) were being written and that, on the other, pre-Christian art and literature were being re-examined and excerpted and the riches of the Old Testament re-analyzed. The *Psalms* of David, Solomon's *Song of Songs*, *Proverbs*, and Jeremiah's *Lamentations* were adapted to the New Testament, all being infused with Christian meaning. At the same time historical, didactic, and scientific verse, epics, panegyrics, and laments were written in the manner of Homer, David, Solomon, Jeremiah. The important discoveries of science and the literature of various peoples were being translated. Grigor Pahlavuni (The Lesser-Vkayaser), Grigor Tgha, Nerses Shnorhali, Mkhitar Heratsi, Nerses Lambronatsi, and others continued the translation work begun by Grigor Magistros and Catholicos Grigor Vkayaser, who lived in the eleventh century.

Indeed there is a striking phenomenon during the period under study. Numerous works were transformed from prose to poetry. Contrary to literary tradition and spiritual practice, the Bible, the life of Jesus, the *vitae* of prominent individuals, and Armenian history were being rendered into verse. Dogmatics, didactic works, and admonitory epistles were being written in verse. The urge to write poetry was a widespread phenomenon. It was as if expression in meter was more pleasing and comprehensible than prose narration.

It was from such a historical and literary background that the talented twelfth-century poet and musician Nerses Shnorhali (Nerses IV Klayetsi, Songster) appeared. He is, after Grigor Narekatsi, the greatest figure in Armenian medieval literature.

The years from the twenties to the seventies of the twelfth century, when Shnorhali lived, were complex and turbulent times. The people, dispossessed of their land, were forced to resettle in Syria and Cilicia; and, in order to reconstitute their political autonomy, they had to struggle against the Byzantine empire and Mesopotamian sultans and emirs. These events made a deep impression upon Nerses Shnorhali and are reflected in every page of his work, where he expressed the patriotic sentiments of the struggle of the time.

Shnorhali was born in 1101 or 1102, into the family of Apirat Pahlavuni, of the prominent princely Pahlavuni dynasty, in the fortress of Tzovk located in the Tluk province of Cilicia. Nerses was educated in Karmir Vank in Cilicia, under the tutelage of the gifted Stepanos Manuk. Several men of intellect and distinction took an interest in Shnorhali's education and instruction, including Grigor Catholicos Vkayaser, the Elder (son of Grigor Magistros). After the latter's death, Barsegh Catholicos Anetsi, and then Nerses' brother Grigor Pahlavuni, who became Catholicos at the young age of twenty, took over.

Upon completing his studies in the monastery, Nerses was ordained a priest and in 1135 elevated to the rank of bishop.

As a consequence of unfavorable political conditions the Catholicosate moved from place to place, and Nerses Shnorhali traveled with it from Kesun to Tzovk and then in 1150 to Hromkla (which means "Greek Fortress"). There he lived and worked until the end of his days, and hence is also known as Nerses Klayetsi. In 1166 he was anointed Catholicos; and led, as he had prior to his patriarchal years, an intense and productive literary, public, and ecclesiastic life. Shnorhali died on August 13, 1173, at the age of 71.¹

Pamphleteer, diplomat, educator, poet, and musician, Nerses was a man of many talents and was thus known as Shnorhali, "full of grace." In the words of Gulielmus Villefroy, the French Armenologist, "there was no field of knowledge in which this famous Patriarch did not excel."² In Armenian literature he was given the epithets "Philosopher," "Second Illuminator," "Universal Doctor," and "Universalist."

Shnorhali's art is diverse in genres and different in content; it was shaped and developed in the period of secularization of culture during the twelfth century. It is with him that the poetic secularization, begun in the tenth century, was finally secured. The efforts of Hovhannes Sarkavag, Grigor Magistros, Aristakes Lastiverttsi and others played an important role in this change, preparing the way for the emergence of Nerses Shnorhali in the field of Armenian literature. He was a figure, whom the Belgian Armenologist Félix Nève described as "being an enthusiastic and productive author, who left an amazingly great name in poetry and prose."³

Shnorhali's literary talent was manifested first and foremost in theological, ecclesiastic, and dogmatic issues. These topics have been preserved in many letters, writings, and commentaries. They are valuable for the history of the Armenian Church. Furthermore, in contrast to Shnorhali's literary legacy, they are in prose and divided into three parts: rhetorical, dogmatic, and personal.

Atenabanutiun (Oration), considered one of the first of his prose works, was the address he gave on the occasion of his election as Catholicos. In it he praised his brother, Catholicos Grigor Pahlavuni, and spoke in plain and unadorned language about the state of the country and the problems facing the Armenian Church.

A broad-minded individual, Shnorhali at the same time expressed penetrating views on ecumenical issues, defending the interests of the Armenian Church. The issue here was more political than religious, for in the twelfth century the movement for church unity advocated by the Byzantines had political objectives. Many attempts were made to unite the Armenian and Byzantine Churches. If successful, this would have meant the loss of distinctiveness for the Armenian Church and result in its dependence upon Byzantium. With prudent diplomacy, Shnorhali proposed that the Greek, Syrian, and Armenian Churches strive for mutual understanding, preserving the principles of equality and independence.

Valuable among his religious works is *Tught endhanrakan* (Universal Encyclical) (1166) in which the author treats issues relating to doctrine and gives advice to various social classes. This provides a picture of contemporary life, mores, sectarian movements, traditions, ways of life, and classes in medieval Armenia.

The laxity of religious spirit, begun in the eleventh century, was a deep concern for the pious Shnorhali. Disturbed by secular tendencies of the clergy, he made exhortations to temperance and virtue, criticized the greed of clerics, and questioned the purity of their faith. Besides its historic and cognitive value, *Universal Encyclical* has literary merit. It is written in a simple style but with vivid imagery and attests to the author's rhetorical talent.

Nerses Shnorhali manifested the full range of his multifaceted talent in his poetic works, which comprise *sharakans*, odes, and coda-chants (*gandz*), doctrinal and historical poems, prayers, nursery rhymes, and riddles. It is worth mentioning that the genres of the epic, both religious and historical, riddles, metrical exhortations, didactic poems, epistles, and eulogies, written in verse form, were first utilized by him.

In 1151 Shnorhali wrote the poem *Ban havato* (Dictum of Faith) (1,500 lines), which encompasses doctrinal issues, the Gospel according to John (rendered in verse), and an imaginative description of the last judgement. In it, for each letter of the alphabet one four-line stanza is written, expressing a certain moral wisdom, and aims at certain didactic purposes. It is not a work of literary merit and does not bear the mark of the author's creative individuality. One year later, in 1152, Shnorhali, expanding upon the same topic, composed a long poem, *Voghbergutiun vipasanakan i tarits srbots* (Epic Lamentation From the Holy Writ) based on the Old and New Testaments, called by the first letters of the opening lines *Hisus vordi* (Jesus the Son). This poem shows the influences of *Lamentations* by Grigor Narekatsi and *Thousand-Line Poem* by Grigor Magistros, resembling the first in its lyric inspiration and the second in its subject style and -in rhyme pattern. *Jesus the Son* is composed of three books: the first is the Old Testament, considered as mankind's past, with episodes from history linked to Christianity; the second, the New Testament, mankind's present; and, the third book, the last judgment, mankind's future. This four-thousand-line poem has narrative qualities which, as the author called it, is an epic lamentation, filled with warm and unique sentiments.

In this work, as with that of Grigor Narekatsi, "Words unto God" is the poem's main axis, around which are woven the author's spiritual afflictions, regret and confession, his self-flagellation and penance. Shnorhali is tormented by the weight of his sins, of various

kinds and degrees. He compares them with the Tower of Babel. Burning in the flames of sin, he seeks the refreshing heavenly dew, "rain of life," which might cool his burning essence.

May your dew descend as upon a kiln,
As rain of life in the morning;
May it put out the flame of my burning,
May it turn into a cloud bracing.⁴

The human being, gone astray on the paths of earthly life, in the struggle of soul and body, in the battle between good and evil forces, is powerless and helpless without the strength and protection of God. The duality of body and soul discourage him, and he imagines himself wind-blown autumn grass. Nature and life were for Shnorhali the source of beauty, from which he drew living images in vivid colors. The author's imagination grows even sharper in the passage describing the final judgment, when Gabriel's trumpet sounds in the silence of night, starting the Grand Trial. Heaven and earth quake, souls regain their bodies as when they were thirty, and are punished or justified according to the lives they led.

Then the elements trembled,
The firmament quaked,
Billowed as waves of the sea
In the cauldron of yesteryear;
The land shook wide,
The core of its foundation moved;
One trammeled the other,
And both stood shaking,
The mountains at their bases shuddered,
And with violent clash they rumbled,
The hard fabric of stones melted,
And all matter went up in flames.⁵

Shnorhali turns to Jesus, seeking and asking that He rectify and cleanse his soul and senses from worldly ills in order to comprehend God's commandments and the unassailable teachings of Christianity.

Comparing the subject matter and poetic similarities of the works of Nerses Shnorahli and Grigor Narekatsi, Manuk Abeghian writes:

In the poetry of Nerses Shnorhali the lament is mild, sad, and delicate; everything is calm and gentle. There are no elevated swings and flights—neither the scorching and smoldering of the heart nor the burning and fiery contrition. Here we do not find the desperate cry and scream, with which Grigor Narekatsi tore apart and destroyed himself while lamenting. Nerses Shnorhali's outpouring of emotion is also sincere, the fervor of his religious repentance is great; but, as usual, he does not cross the bounds of measure. With both of them the sentiments are perfectly the same, but they are different in breadth and form. While Shnorhali is like a well-behaved man, who knows how to control himself, Narekatsi is reminiscent of a natural man, whose inner self is unfettered and who expresses his inner convulsions directly without restraint and with sobbing weeps. He is like a turbulent flood which, in a whirlwind, drives wave after wave forward, and those falling into it are taken torturously further and further without reaching the edge; while Shnorhali is like a fountainhead, a clear spring, which calmly gurgles forth, and seated on its bank, the reader meditates on the world. But with all these differences, Shnorhali's work is not less affective than Narekatsi's. It is a moaning: a sigh, meek and mild, and not sobs and wails, violent and intense.⁶

Abeghian attributes the stylistic differences between these two writers to differences in their human temperament, as well as the influence of social upheavals and of the changing times.

In Shnorhali's days the mystic ecstasies of religious dedication and the inflamed mind bent on self-flagellation had been quieted and given way to the secularization of ideas. Instead of spiritual turmoil and sacrifices in the name of faith, there reigned a peaceful and quiet monastic mentality, which was distant from the former religious passion and fervor for penance. Parallel to this, the powerful and flowing style of Narekatsi is replaced by mild and calm poetry, in order to embody the internalized monastic aspirations. Moreover, for the first time in

medieval literature, the parts of the human body, their functions, as well as the everyday lives of farmers are mentioned. The epic *Jesus the Son*, sung or told in chant with its gentleness and sincere inner lyricism, was a well liked book, widely known in the middle ages.

Among the works of doctrinal nature, universally acknowledged is Shnorhali's prayer "Havatov khostovanim" (In Faith I Confess). Suffused with spontaneous and deep faith, this contrition opens the door of the human soul before the Holy Trinity, easing and comforting those who recite it. The poem is written in a beautiful and musical style; its simplicity and content has made it an ecumenic invocation, translated into many languages. It is still recited during confession in the Armenian Church.⁷

Also among his diverse output, his spiritual hymns—odes, coda-chants (*gandz*), and prayers—have a unique charm.⁸

In poetic art, Shnorhali's *sharakans* are paralleled by his odes, which were composed for the purpose of being sung on dominical feasts. From this point of view the hymns of Advent, Christmas, and Resurrection are particularly accomplished, full of colorful naturalistic similes, and written in different meters. Particularly noteworthy are the three odes dedicated to the Virgins of Hripsimants. With lively meters, remarkable alliterative qualities, and descriptive style, they are unique and striking poetic creations.

Splendrous love-nurtured peacock,
 Finely shining, golden stranded, ardent,
 Three-haloed anointed most desired,
 Angel most beautiful, Hripsime.
 Dove gliding gracefully through the air ...
 Thou upright serpent-slaying stork ...
 Leaf-covered, red-colored like an apple,
 Thou noble bride veiled in blood,
 Angel most beautiful, Hripsime.⁹

The spirit of the new times, marked by reawakening and worldliness, found expression in Shnorhali's pedagogical and didactic verse. As a genre, these poems were innovative. Long before Shnorhali, Grigor Magistros is known to have been the one who laid the foundation of this genre. However, Shnorhali was the first to write for children,

creating a wide variety of literature for the purpose of educating the young, including didactic poems, addresses, essays, proverbs, and riddles. In these were treated the individual's striving for spiritual and physical perfection, his education, and the development of his intellectual capacities. Indeed, social and moral education was a new issue and was linked to the anthropocentric world view of Shnorhali's day.

The poem "Advice on the Education of Children" was written principally for children. As such it is the first of its kind in Armenian literature. It teaches the Armenian alphabet and gives a saying for each letter, taking into account the child's age, comprehension, and taste. These simple yet wise quatrains inspire love of learning and industry in the child—love for knowledge and disdain for evil and greed. Shnorhali personifies each letter of the alphabet and his didactic intent is ever present:

Like a sea, *Dza* says,
Is wisdom which comes from heaven.
Open the sail of your soul;
Be ready with your mind to soak it up.¹⁰

The lengthy poem "Thoughts in Verse" is composed of a separate octave for each of the letters of the alphabet, each containing a lesson. However, instead of educational issues, questions of good-breeding are addressed here and the roots of evil explained.

To the crown, *To* says, royalty,
Or princely republic:
When you receive men,
Do not consider them your own,
But like your fathers, who have passed,
Consider yourself a flower;
And do not be haughty,
But be sweet, mild and humble.¹¹

Or:

Ghad says to take the ingenious helm yourself,

To sail this sea wisely;
Disdain the distant waves,
Stand up to them strongly;
Steer the ship of your soul relentlessly,
Upon the wings of the soul toward wisdom;
That you might reach calmly,
The tranquil place in peace.¹²

His riddle-proverbs, which were a literary innovation in Armenian literature, served the same purpose. They were called "Parables for Peoples' Delight." These were written in popular language and were short anecdotes about everyday life whose aim was to entertain people and make them merry. Shnorhali wrote more than 300 parables. When divided by content, they fall into two groups: religious and secular.

The first, whose subject matter is drawn from the Old and New Testaments, convey meaning through allegory. The latter have their origin in popular folklore. They are devoted to man and the physical world, animals, and nature. Not only is the subject matter of these riddles popular, so are the images, thoughts, style, and language. While the riddles drawn from the Bible are written in Classical Armenian, the rest are composed in the plain vernacular. Through the characterization of objects and events expressed in similes and metaphors, Shnorhali broadened the reader's ability to perceive the world, develop his mental agility and the capacity for discernment.

One such charming poetic image is the riddle "Heaven":

The Church is high and wide,
It is built without columns or pillars,
There are lamps hanging without cables,
The torches give light without oil.¹³

These allegorical quatrains, whose theme is the sun, moon, the stars, the sparrow, the rooster, the ant, the wolf, and finally man and his way of life, try to present the enigmatic phenomena of nature and the universe, considering man a miracle in creation, likening life to a hotel where the arriving guest is honored and the departing one is plundered.

There was an inn upon the earth,
 On an onerous highway,
 To which strangers came,
 And familiar people went.
 When the guests came they were honored,
 And when they left they were plundered,
 Not just part of their chattels were taken,
 But their entire possessions robbed.¹⁴

His riddle about a book also presents an imaginative picture.

I saw a house spread out in white,
 And black birds were roosting in it,
 They were laying eggs of every sort,
 Speaking in tongues of rational beings.¹⁵

Shnorhali's riddles reflect the mores, values, beliefs, and interests of the times in which he lived. They sharpened the child's imagination, and developed his artistic sensitivities, inspired love for kindness, work, the homeland, and literacy.

His riddles are for the most part in verse, with 4 + 4 feet or in the *hairen* meter. It was common practice for troubadours to sing in riddles. From this fact one can assume that Shnorhali's riddles, with their metered patterns, were meant to be sung. According to historian Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the riddles were said at "bacchanalia and at weddings," that is, they were meant for entertainment and amusement. This proves that literary genres were becoming secular and that secular poetry was spreading beyond the Church—a transformation which was very significant. Indeed, Shnorhali was moving from secularization to popularization.

The poem *On Heaven and Its Adornments*, written at the request of the eminent doctor Mkhitar Heratsi in 1162, was also composed with didactic intent. This work on astronomy studies the heavenly bodies, their nature as well as movements. It lacks, however, great artistic merit.

In the wide range of the author's literary output, Shnorhali's historico-political poems, *The Epic* and *Lament for Edessa*, occupy a special place.

The Epic, subtitled "Composition in the Homeric Style on the Armenian People ...," consists of 1600 lines and is the first historical, patriotic poem in Armenian medieval literature. Written in 1121, this was one of Shnorhali's earliest works and was based on Movses Khorenatsi's *History*. *The Epic* was influenced by the Homeric epic style and in it he panegyricizes Armenia's former glory, her greatness, and her spirit of struggle, and cherishes hope for freedom and redress. He tells of Armenia's forefathers, Trdat, Gregory the Illuminator, and the Pahlavuni dynasty. Shnorhali, with warmth and pride, recalls the national and religious figures who spared nothing in service to their homeland and people. He enumerates, however, with great trepidation the enemies of the Armenian people, Arabs and Seljuks, who "like bloodthirsty beasts" brought isolation upon the land of Armenia.

"If religious poetry," writes Asatur Mnatsakanian in light of the poem's non-religious nature, "usually memorialized saints and divinities, then secular poetry complemented it with heroes and heroism."¹⁶

Artistically unremarkable, this poem, despite its single rhyme pattern and its structural flaws, is written in accessible language and Homeric influences are discernible, primarily in the description of events and similes.

Shnorhali's *Lament for Edessa*, his masterpiece, was dedicated to the historical events of his time.¹⁷ It is not only the highpoint of Shnorhali's lyric works but also one of the gems of medieval Armenian poetry. The basis for the lyric poem was a historic event—the destruction of the Mesopotamian city of Edessa and the slaughter of its inhabitants by Emir Zangi in 1144. When the Emir of Aleppo, Zangi, attacked and besieged Edessa, where the French Crusaders ruled, there lived many Christian peoples, among them Armenians. Although the inhabitants fought heroically against a superior enemy, in the end, the fierce hordes invaded the city, savagely massacred the people, destroying and razing the town. During the siege, Nerses's nephew, the young Grigor Apirat, was in Edessa. He managed to escape and tell Shnorhali about the gruesome events he had witnessed, begging his uncle to write them down. *Lament for Edessa* is therefore the direct expression of these impressions, believed to have been written in 1145 or 1146.

The poem is 2,096 lines long and is divided into four parts: prologue, the siege and destruction of Edessa, maledictions, and future expectations. As a narrative device he used personification, an

innovation in Shnorhali's time. Edessa is personified as a mother who has lost her child; she is telling of her devastation and lamenting her inconsolable losses.

Lamentation as a literary form, in ancient and medieval literature came from Movses Khorenatsi's "Lament." This literary genre took further shape in subsequent years, with its social nature being replaced with personal and individual experiences (Davtag Kertogh, Grigor Narekatsi). It was on this foundation that Shnorhali's *Lament for Edessa* was composed, expressing the people's pain and grief and the author's patriotic sorrow and concern.

A widowed and wretched woman embodies the city of Edessa. She appeals to the peoples and churches of the world—the important cities of Christendom: Jerusalem, Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria—telling and bewailing the misfortune that had befallen her.

Cry, cry in a loud voice,
Lament me wailing.
Edessa, the city Urfa,
Orphaned and childless widow,
I call to you in a woman's voice,
Sobbing and miserable.
Lifting a veil from my head,
I tear my ornamental cover,
Discard my desirable habit,
I cut my hair unsparingly,
I beat my heart and chest,
I strike my face with a slap,
I sit in mourning in my dark house,
As a mourner is wont,
And instead of purple clothes,
I wear black, the color of sorrow,
I spill tears without measure,
Flowing and abundant like a river,
For I was shamed on earth,
Despised by the universe ... ¹⁸

As preoccupied as Shnorhali was with the misfortunes in Cilicia, he was also deeply disturbed by the lost glory of Armenia and

the unrelenting calamities that had visited upon the land for centuries. He reminds us of the glory of Vagharshapat and the helplessness of Ani. The land of Armenia shared with Edessa the same fate; both had lost their vitality and former glory and had fallen into ruins. Recounting the losses in the land of Armenia, Edessa asks Vagharshapat:

But I ask you, O coveted one,
I seek an answer to my words;
Where is your ornate crown now,
Or your miraculous halo?
Where the arrays of the maiden,
Bride of the son of the king?
Where the finery of the wedding chamber?
Where is the throne of the Patriarch,
Or the priests on the holy altar?
Where the deacons in service,
Or the ministers of the mass?
Where the scent of incense unto you,
Invisible and visible?
Or the congregations
On the dominical feast days?
Where, then, the thrones of the king
Within you, city of Vagharshapat?
Or the lords of the king ... ¹⁹

The poem's lyric hero, a fine psychological character, tells about the city's defense, the stubborn resistance of the population, their heroism, and their abnegation. The minute descriptions of the city, based on contrasts, make the destruction of peaceful and orderly Edessa yet more striking—the ravaging, pillaging, murdering. In a transformed spiritual state, Edessa recalls its bright and prosperous past, graced with the wonders of nature.

The water of life flowed forth from me,
Supporting the cheerful flowering plants;
Like rivers flowed her streams,
Making the gardens drunk;
The sea rippled in my midst,

With sweet air she laughed;
 She cleaned the mire of pollution,
 And adorned the square;
 She created plants of many kinds,
 Like a paradise of Eden,
 She blossomed in leafy trees,
 She brought forth fruit most abundantly,
 Her thick foilage rustled gently,
 An immortal scent arose from her.²⁰

The structure of the medieval city, the moving and vivid strategic operations, the occupation and fall of Edessa, and then scenes from the city's horrifying destruction are astutely portrayed. In the poem, Zangi's character is the embodiment of the blood-thirsty Eastern tyrant. The author sees in the enmity that opposes Christians to Muslims divergent conceptions of religion. The Christians had sinned; consequently, they were being punished. This is the pious author's conclusion, a natural and rational world view in Shnorhali's times.

The lament of the personified city gradually unfolding becomes universal; the author appeals to all of mankind to mourn Edessa's disconsolate grief—grief with which its sorrowful sobs and deep sensitivity resounds in the human heart filled with feelings of remorse. This, according to Abeghian's assessment, "... was the first poetic lament of our people's centuries' old wounds, a 'Patriot's Lament'."²¹

At the end of the poem, Edessa, bathed in blood, pours forth curses and maledictions on the enemy's head—the bloodthirsty Zangi—and with boundless, inflamed revenge calls for justice and redress.

Your days in the sun cut short by the sword,
 May you have dry grass for a home;
 And the time of your life cut off,
 In which your hope was placed.
 With you, may your people be lost, too,
 Obliterated by the generations of Hagar;
 May your sons be orphaned, your wives enslaved,
 May they be beggars and staggering;
 Might they leave from their shelters in exile,
 And flounder instead of mine;

Whatever you might have labored for,
May others pillage and take from you ... ²²

Conversely, Edessa expresses tenderness and love toward her fallen sons and daughters making them worthy of immortality for their heroic self-sacrifice.

But you my beloved sons,
For me, you are not dead, but alive;
For those who believed on earth,
Will be crowned in heaven.

The author hopes that the peoples of Europe—the new Crusade—will save the Christians of the East from destruction. It is noteworthy that this very idea was expressed four hundred years after Shnorhali by Torquato Tasso in his celebrated epic poem *Gerusalemme Liberata* (Jerusalem Liberated).

Lament for Edessa, despite its tragic tone and content, is an optimistic work. The poem has vivid colors and is striking with its secular spirit and love of the world. In Armenian literature, this was the first historic epic, in which the patriotic spirit of Movses Khorenatsi and Yeghishe and the psychological undulations of Grigor Narekatsi are felt. These are qualities which have, throughout the Middle Ages and even into modern times, reverberated in the poetry of many authors.²³

Shnorhali, who created various poetic genres from short riddles to the lengthy epic *Lament for Edessa*, made a great contribution to the art of poetry in Armenian. He has considerably influenced his contemporaries as well as succeeding generations of poets. More than anything else, Shnorhali is distinguished by his feel for meter and music which, in contrast to blank verse, has a rhythmic and rhyming pattern, built on prosody of stress and syllable patterns and syllabics. He used rhyming and unrhyming meters from five to fifteen feet, introducing the twelve-syllable line (4 + 4 + 4), the iambic, bipartite nine-syllable line (4 + 5), and the iambic five-syllable meter, which in later centuries became a standard for Armenian poets.

The rhyme scheme used for the first time by Grigor Magistros in his poem *To Manuche* (1045) did not find wider acceptance in Armenian poetry. Shnorhali was the first to compose a wide variety of

rhymed verse, drawing upon the efforts of his predecessors in this field (Narekatsi and Magistros). He used two types of rhyme: monosyllabic and polysyllabic. His creative output was largely of the monosyllabic variety (*Homeric Epic, Jesus the Son, On Heaven ...*, odes, prayers, etc.), from which he later moved away, by using polysyllabic rhymes of various kinds (*Dictum on Faith, Lament for Edessa.*). Indeed Clemens Galanus considered Shnorhali a "world-class master" worthy of being ranked with the "Greeks and Latins."²⁴

Shnorhali's poetic art is distinguished by the use of striking metaphors, meaningful similes, pertinent epithets, contrasts, acrostics, neologisms, and other rhetorical forms. By means of the aforementioned devices, he expresses vividly his concepts and penetrates the essence of things. The beautiful and picturesque language of the poet is enthralling, especially in *Lament for Edessa* and his riddles, replete with wise phrases and sayings, drawn from daily life.

Lament for Edessa is noteworthy as well for its use of personification, when a lifeless city comes alive in the form of a woman. Shnorhali also used the same device to personify the heavens in *On Heaven and its Adornments*. This literary technique had very ancient roots, originating in animal fables, tales, and stories. It is also found in the Bible and in Classical Greek works. As a picturesque and effective literary form, personification derives from the Greek, and it means "to take on a face." It was also used in ancient and medieval Armenian literature by such authors as Movses Khorenatsi ("I Lament You, Land of Armenia") and Sayat Nova (when he address his *kamancha*). This is a unique device through which Shnorhali expresses his feelings, thoughts, and grief. Not only is the subject matter new but also the means of making poetic concepts more real. And although the theme of lamentation was not new in Armenian literature, however Shnorhali's present work had a profound influence in the Middle Ages on Armenian lamentations. Poets such as Grigor Tgha, Stepanos Orbelian, Arakel Baghishetsi, Grigor Khlatetsi, and others in modern times have been influenced by Shnorhali.²⁵

The content of Shnorhali's art is touching, natural, and enchanting and has linguistic decorum. He introduced into Armenian lyric poetry freshness, variety of meter and form as well as inspired the new secular ideas and patriotism.

Shnorhali's language is simple and bears the clarity of popular speech. This was of course the exigencies of the time, which gradually led to Middle Armenian. In this regard Shnorhali served as a bridge between Classical and vernacular literary Armenian in succeeding centuries. Moreover, his valuable literary, pedagogical, historical, and religious works in their simplicity and accessibility inspired for centuries on end medieval Armenian poets, who strove to emulate Shnorhali's perfection. He had a deep and lasting influence on Armenian poetry and became the object of poetry himself. Nerses Lambronatsi, Grigor Tgha, Vardan Areveltsi, Grigor Khlatetsi, Vahram Rabuni, Hovhannes Karnetsi, and other medieval poets wrote about him, composing panegyrics, *sharakans*, poetry, coda-chants (*gandz*), odes, and memorials. Shnorhali's name and fame have found their way into popular tradition.²⁶

11. The Armenian Folk Epic: *David of Sasun*

Medieval Armenian literature includes, aside from the literary genres already examined, various prose and verse epic narratives with folk origins which were not recorded and thus do not form part of the corpus of Armenian written literature. The Armenian people created sagas, among which *Sasuntsi Davit* (David of Sasun) stands out as the greatest and most heroic. This epos is also known as *Sasna Tzrer* (Madmen of Sasun) and *Jojants Tun* (House of Giants).¹ A creation of the people, it was first recited during the Middle Ages and was preserved orally for centuries.

Historiography and historical chronicles tell us nothing about this epic. Medieval Armenian annalists paid no attention to the folk epic since it was popular among the lower classes and manifested the language, taste, and perceptions of those classes.

The oldest information available about *David of Sasun* is found in the memoirs of two Portuguese travellers who were in Armenia in the sixteenth century. They reported that the epic was recounted in a number of areas of Armenia.

In the 1870s the story was set down in writing for the first time. The folklorist Garegin Srvandztiants transcribed the saga as told by Krpo of Mush and published it under the title *Grots u brots yev Sasuntsi Davit kam Mheri dur* (Literary and Popular Lore and David of Sasun or the Door of Mher) in Constantinople in 1874, considered to be the first version of its telling.

The second transcription of the epic, as told in the district of Mokk, was published in 1889 in Shushi by Manuk Abeghian under the title *Davit yev Mher, zhoghovrdakan diutsaznakan vep* (David and Mher, Folk Heroic Epic). After voluminous research Abeghian then published *Hai zhoghovrdakan vepe* (The Armenian Folk Epic) in 1908. It was

again Abeghian who together with Karapet Melik-Ohanjanian realized the first scholarly publication of over fifty variants of *David of Sasun* in three large volumes entitled *Sasna Tzrer* (Madmen of Sasun) (1936, 1944, 1951) in which the epic art of the Armenian people is showcased in all its profundity. Grigor Khalatians, Mkrtich Emin, Nikoghayos Mar, Hovsep Orbeli, Derenik Demirchian, Grigor Grigorian, Karo Sasuni, and others also have furthered the work of research on *David of Sasun*.

The many available accounts of the saga, gathered from different parts of Armenia including Mush, Taron, Sasun, the basin of Lake Van, Alashkert, and Ejmiatzin, complement each other. It is amazing that centuries of retelling have not robbed *David of Sasun* of its popular spirit or the heroic impetus of the unfolding events, and that it remained unwritten and unpolished in obscurity until the nineteenth century.

The millennium of the epic's creation was celebrated in Armenia in 1939. This served as an occasion for the publication of many essays and scholarly articles; an integrated text (eleven thousand lines) based on fifty selected variants was prepared and published.²

The epic *David of Sasun* is a magnificent monument to the Armenian people's struggle against the Arab Caliphate in the ninth and tenth centuries. It originated in Sasun; but, subsequently, spread throughout all Armenia, enlarged with folk songs and folktales woven around historical events, and finally becoming a complete saga.

Contemporary philological research methods bring to light a great deal of data about society and history with which this epic, considered but a fable, is full. Numerous types of evidence concerning ancient Armenia testify to the existence of real bases of historical truth and establish that *David of Sasun* is the story of Armenia's own past. And although this whole wealth of evidence and tradition is placed within the realm of imagination and allegory, it has an important significance and value for the study of the simple outlook and perceptions of Armenians of the era in which it is situated and even of the distant past. *David of Sasun* also sheds light on the social order and life not only in the Arab period but before and even after it, revealing certain substantive details.

It is evident that the saga could not preserve the precise timing and characteristics of people and events, nor could chronological

progression serve as the unifying link between its different parts. It is a long chain of episodes that took place in different times, outwardly tied to each other through fictional and allegorical passages, representing the old traditions of storytelling. They are also unified by the fundamental ideas which dominated ancient Armenian morality. From the beginning to the end of the epos, patriotism, nobility, and truth are seen as the cardinal values, as the legitimate and absolute measures of success, and ultimately as the national creed. These values permeate the many descriptions of the liberation of the homeland, the motherland. All the battles and wars are fought for this reason and without feelings of vengeance; this is what makes the stories heroic. The descriptions, however, are anachronistic with geographic and ethnographic facts confused and exaggerated.

David of Sasun is composed of a series of actual historical occurrences imbued with mythological elements. In it are condensed the Armenian people's values and philosophy of life, the shining pages of their heroism, episodes from their struggles, and their longing for freedom and independence. The epic is told in the form of prose but with a musical meter, and certain parts are even sung and have been rhymed. It is composed of four cycles, each of which is the story of one generation of Sasun's titans and the acts of bravery of the hero whose name the cycle bears. These cycles contain the story of four generations of heroes of the house of Sasun, one completing and continuing the other.

The first cycle, called "Sanasar and Baghdasar," is the story of the establishment of the house of Sasun. Baghdad's powerful caliph succeeds in marrying by force the daughter of Armenia's King Gagik, Tzovinar, who before leaving for Baghdad travels around her homeland. She is made pregnant by two handfuls of water, a large one and another half its size, from a spring gushing out of a rock. In Baghdad, two children are born to her, a large boy, whom she names Sanasar, and a small one, whom she names Baghdasar.

The birth of the children angers the caliph, and he arranges to kill Tzovinar; but, due to a sudden turn of events, this is postponed. The caliph again tries to gain control of Armenia, is defeated after seven years of fighting against Gagik, and is barely able to flee to Baghdad. The caliph promises the idols to offer Sanasar and Baghdasar as sacrifices in gratitude for his successful escape.

Learning about this, Sanasar and Baghdasar—who have quickly grown and are endowed with extraordinary strength after bathing in Katnaghbiur (Milky Fountain)—kill the caliph and, taking their mother, leave Baghdad for Armenia. They build an inaccessible fortress, Sasun, in the lofty mountains. The brave brothers' fame spreads everywhere and poor people hasten to come and live in Sasun, which prospers and grows strong. The brothers show great strength and courage, fight against sixty "buffalo-like" contenders and against a water-obstructing dragon, much like the Greek Hercules and the Persian Rostam. They marry the daughters of the Copper City's king—the older with Karsun Chiugh Deghdzun Tzam (Forty Braids of Golden Hair) and the younger with her sister. Sanasar becomes father of three children, Vergo, Dzenov (Thunder-voiced) Hovan, and Mher, and soon dies. Baghdasar remains childless.

Sanasar is a legendary giant of supernatural origin. He and his brother Baghdasar are mythological figures, formed of a mixture of biblical and legendary elements, whose source of nourishment and strength is water. In this cycle full of mythological elements, water generally serves as life's source. Both Tzovinar and her two children are descended from water, since Tzovinar (which means "born of the sea") in Armenian pagan mythology is considered the goddess of water and rain. She resembles the Greek goddess Leto, the Roman Rhea, and the Indian Saranyu, in the mythological fables about twins.

Tzovinar's son, Sanasar, is linked by his strength and activities, as well as by external attributes, to the elements of nature. He is baptized on a *tonir* (eastern oven), from which he receives his fiery spirit. The fabulous Tur Kaitzaki (Lightning Sword) and Kurkik Jalali (Fiery Colt)—who spoke in the language of humans, flew faster than the wind towards the sun, and freely traveled under the seas—both come from the bottom of the sea. The fortress that the brothers built, Sasun, is the house of Armenians, their fatherland, which its people desire to see powerful and independent.

Sanasar's brother, Baghdasar, who was born from half a handful of water, is less wise and brave than his brother; but, the two of them are invincible when they fight and work together.

The mythological twin brothers have much in common with others who appear in the pages of the literatures of eastern peoples. They are similar to the two Ashvins and Aspins in Indian and old Iranian

mythology, as well as to the Roman twins Romulus and Remus.³ As far as the historical evidence for the first cycle is concerned, according to researchers, the source of those events goes back to the seventh century B.C. and the Assyrian king Sennacherib (Senekerim), whose two sons Sanasar and Adramelik (Baghdasar) imprisoned their father and fled to Urartu (Armenia). Berosos the Babylonian (third century B.C.) and the Greek historian Alexander Polyhistor (second century B.C.), as well as the Old Testament, provide historical information about this. Among Armenian historians, Movses Khorenatsi writes of Sanasar and Baghdasar (Adramelik) in *Hayots patmutiun*. He quotes Eusebius of Caesarea, who in his *Chronology* culled information provided by Alexander Polyhistor. Over the course of centuries this historically-grounded tale took root among the people and, enriched with new episodes in the days of Arab rule over Armenia, was transformed into a distinct epic narrative.⁴

The first cycle generally is quite legendary and concerns pagan times. It is full of mythological, biblical, Christian, and national elements. Anachronistic episodes, which have existed independently in different centuries, are connected to each other in one story, finding historical and thematic commonalities. Thus, for example, if the scene of the idolatrous Sennacherib's incursion towards Jerusalem in the seventh century B.C. is moved to Armenia, then Tzovinar is already Christian, and it is to save her people that she marries the religiously heterodox caliph. Tzovinar's son Baghdasar, or Adramelik, is connected with the histories of Babylon and Baghdad, and the golden apple and the letters given to the wind have national traditional significance, while Kurkik Jalali, the monsters, and the fairies (*peri*) are mythological beings.

In the second cycle, called "Metz kam Ariutzadzev Mher" (Great or Leonine Mher), Mher's power and bravery, which he had inherited from his father Sanasar, are set forth. However, Sanasar's two other children, Dzenov Hovan and Vergo, are mere mortals endowed with human weaknesses. Great Mher at the age of fifteen kills a wild lion, freeing the Sasunites from famine, and fights Spitak Dev (White Demon), saving Tevatoros's daughter, the beauty Armaghan. He marries her and from this union is born David, their only son.

Mher, the legendary, mythological hero of his valiant generation, obtains his father's weapons and wonder-steed and grows in power, thanks to the waters of Katnaghbiur. Although these are the

common characteristics of father and son, each of them is a very individual figure, a particular embodiment of chivalry, bravery, and power. Many specialists in folklore, in speaking about the legendary origins of Great Mher and Pokr Mher (Little Mher), have taken the position that Mher is the Armenian pagan god Mihr, who in ancient times was worshipped as the god of fire and the sun. He is similar to the oldest hunter of Indian and Iranian legends, Mithra (Mihr), who symbolizes the sun and light in opposition to darkness. The acts of bravery that he performed (the killing of the lion, the White Demon, and the Black Bull) make him comparable to the Greek mythological hero Hercules and the Babylonian mythical hero Gilgamesh.

The third cycle and the entire saga are called by David's name because this cycle forms the largest part of the epic. It is also the most complete cycle, since it describes in greater detail the childhood, adolescence, and battles of its hero and the life of Sasun.

After the death of Great Mher, David, having lost both father and mother, is taken to Mser, where he declines to be nourished by the milk of Ismil Khatun's breast and eats butter and honey brought from Sasun. David grows day by day, hour by hour, and swimming in Katnaghbiur, turns into a powerful, invincible youth. David's father, Great Mher, while drunk in Mser had been unfaithful to his wife Armaghan. He had bestowed upon Ismil Khatun a son, Msra Melik (King of Mser), who had inherited his father's unbridled strength, but was also filled with the passion to dominate. David, who as a child lived in a country not his own (Mser), is not subservient to Msra Melik and refuses to pass under Melik's sword. Terrified of David's heroic strength, Msra Melik tries to kill David but does not succeed. David returns to Sasun and becomes a shepherd in the mountains of his homeland. He massacres the forty demons and brings their gold to Sasun, liberates the animals confined by Melik in Tzovasar, and rebuilds the monastery of Marut. And when Msra Melik tries to take possession of Armenia, David of Sasun, taking up his father's arms and armor, together with Kurkik Jalali, Uncle Toros, and his thirty-nine sons, attacks the king's huge forces, yelling:

Ey hey!

You who are asleep, awake,

You who are awake, saddle your horses,

You who have saddled your horses, take up your weapons,
 You who have taken up your weapons, arise, mount!
 Do not say David stole in like a thief,
 And like a thief stole away.⁵

The angry David massacres Melik's troops, when an old Arab throws himself before David and explains to the hero that he should not massacre the people in vain, since it is the king who has brought them here by force and they have no enmity towards Sasun.

Your enemy is Msra Melik,
 Go fight with him.⁶

David goes towards Melik's tent and in frightful, single-handed combat annihilates him. Turning towards Melik's troops, he says:

Stay peaceable,
 Do not get up one day and come against Sasun.
 If again you take up arms against us,
 If again you come to fight against us,
 Even if you are in a well forty *kaz* deep,
 Or under a huge millstone,
 David of Sasun will rise up against you,
 Tur Kaitzaki will rise up against you.⁷

The fame of courageous David's acts of heroism spreads afar and reaches Khandut khanum (Lady Khandut). She sends minstrels to Sasun who praise Khandut's beauty. The charmed David goes to search for Khandut and, vanquishing all her suitors, returns together with Khandut to Sasun and marries her. They have one son, Little Mher. David, who years ago had fallen in love with Chmshkik-Sultan and had promised to return to her after seven days, only carries out his promise seven years later. During this period Chmshkik-Sultan has given birth to David's daughter (her father never even saw her) who, wounded by the dishonor to her mother, kills her father, David. Khandut, learning what happened, commits suicide.

David's cycle, which is the center of the entire epos, incorporates a historical recollection of the struggle against the Baghdad

Caliphate, while David is considered by philologists to be David Bagratuni, whose prodigies against the Arabs became the source of folk stories in his own time.

Compared to the other cycles, the action seems more real, and events and protagonists somewhat more distinct. It is conjectured that the historical core of the third cycle is the Sasun rebellion (second half of the ninth century) against the Arabs recounted by Tovma Artzruni. According to him the Armenians were able with a two hundred man group to expel the Arab tax collectors from the country. Generally, it is in the historical events of this period that philologists have tried to find the real model for David. This is because it is David himself who has turned into the inspirational material which has become the basis for creating and elaborating the heroic *David of Sasun*, with the mythic figure of this legendary giant as its center. And those figures who are recalled in the courageous fights against the Arabs in the eighth and ninth centuries, such as Teodoros Rshtuni, Khutetsi Hovnan, Ashot and Davit Bagratuni, provide those characteristics which are condensed in the form of David, and impart to him his chivalric appeal.⁸ Abuset, Musa, Yusuf, and Bugha, as Armenia's enemies, are likened to Msra Melik.

The fourth cycle of the saga tells the circumstances of the tormented life of David's son Little Mher. He is a universal figure who, wandering from country to country, tries to find justice and liberty but in vain. He fights Sasun's enemies, the four grandsons of Kozbadin, and Chmshkik-Sultan and her troops, taking revenge for his father. But here the battle against external enemies no longer occupies an essential place and does not form the ideology of this cycle of the epic. If for David the most important thing was the pursuit of liberty and independence for his country, then it is the unjust order that exists in the world which torments Mher. This he tries to defy with the power of his mighty will. With this desire, upon the request of the people of Baghdad, he kills the demon Kup and liberates Baghdad, saves Aleppo from the evils of the man-eating crone, battles against the tax collectors, saves a city from a flood, and so forth. However, his benevolence is unable to cleanse evil from the land; and Little Mher, who was cursed by David to be immortal and heirless, visits his father's tomb, complains to him about all this, and is shut up in a rock cave, waiting for the day when a grain of wheat will

be as large as a walnut and barley will be as large as the fruit of the dog-rose.

Tradition relates that every year, on Ascension Day and Transfiguration Day, Mher comes out of the Raven's Rock near Van's citadel to see if the world has changed and whether the earth can bear his weight. And, persuaded that everything remains in its former condition, he returns again to the cave. Mher is the same figure as Mihr of the Zoroastrian religion, the son of Ahura Mazda or Ormizd, who was later considered as a savior-apostle. He was to free the world from evil spirits and judge unjust and guilty men, establishing a blessed heavenly kingdom. In this sense, Mher's pagan immortality does not correspond at all to Christian principles of the period when the epic was created. This has analogies in Caucasian and European peoples' mythologies. Errant ideas of distant times coming from afar find a home within the folds of Christian centuries. Mher is a solitary hero and with his mysterious destiny reminds one of Movses Khorenatsi's Artavazd, who was locked up on Mount Ararat.

Aside from being a direct reflection of the liberation battles of the eighth to ninth centuries, *David of Sasun* describes the freedom-loving tendencies of preceding and subsequent centuries. The spirit of struggle is concentrated in it, and it is the reflection of social movements and the national psyche. And thus, here in many fictional episodes, the people's centuries-old emotions and expectations are resolved, and Armenians' dreams of freedom and independence, their desire for peace, and good and humane relations, are realized. At the same time, aspects prominent in the national character—the Armenian's energetic and peace-loving soul—are exhibited. Through this, too, the epic becomes popular, condensing the centuries of experience of Armenian life into a profound generalization of historic events of the past.

Although the mythological element imparts distinct colors to the work with its fabulous and traditional contributions, the saga stands solidly on its national-historical base; and, its various types of folklore (fairy tale, ballad, story, proverb, etc.) appear as a masterfully woven creation of artistic thought and epic imagination.

It is difficult to clearly differentiate reality from fiction in *David of Sasun*. The historical pith consists of the events in ninth-century Sasun, but the story, according to Abeghian, "essentially remains the recollection of events which took place up to the seventeenth century."

That is, it includes historical developments in Sasun and Taron, reflecting the heroic events directed against not only the Arabs but the Seljuk Turks as well.

Studies have established that the legendary portrayals and ancient world view deriving from the pagan era in Armenian history have played a role in the formation of *David of Sasun*. Shifting times transmitted a vast fictional legacy which naturally became part of modern narratives. *Taruni vepe* (The Epic of Tarun) is a story transported from ancient to later times, in which the chain of traditional events is transported from Taron to Sasun. The ancient tale which was told in Taron about Mushegh is woven together with events in Sasun, and the Iranian conquerors are replaced by Arabs. Many events and people have been brought into *David of Sasun* from the traditional Armenian epics of *Parsits paterazm* (The Persian War) and *Taroni paterazm* (The War of Taron) which, gradually changing form, are connected to the occurrences of new times, while keeping the spirit of the old. Among such residues in *David of Sasun* is King Shapi, who is the Persian Shapuh, the memories preserved about Mushegh and King Pap, and so forth. "The establishment of Sanasar and his brother in the Taurus (mountains)," writes Abeghian, "is the same as the story of Mamik-Konak. The story of Sanasar's son Leonine Mher's mountaintop hunt is the same as what is told about Vache, of the lineage of Mamik-Konak ... while David's story, in its essence, is similar to Mushegh's story."⁹

All these historical elements, which are revealed thanks to philological comparative investigation, are not sufficient to entirely explain the full nature of *David of Sasun*. Characteristics are manifested here whose explanation lies outside the bounds of historicity but find a place in the people's mythological and legendary depictions.

The legendary heroes of old Armenian tales find their expression in historical figures, endowing the latter with supernatural qualities. Similar influences explain the similarity of seaborn and stormy Sanasar's fight against the king of the Copper City to save Karsun Chiugh Deghdzun Tzam to that of noble Tigran, who fights the dragon Azhdahak in order to save his sister. Artavazd's confinement in one of the caves of Mount Ararat as a result of his father's curse is nearly the same as Mher's confinement in the hills of Tospan because of David's curse.

The passage of ages transformed the pagan ideology of legendary heroes into that of Christianity, in correspondence with the world-view of the time. But no matter how much the demigods and mythic-legendary events are changed under the influence of Christianity, the former pagan color and soul are, nevertheless, noticeable. The saga's emotional power, in particular, derives from the figures of old mythological times, from instances of past bravery. And even the Christian reciter, who often is inclined to Christianize pagan values, remains true to old traditions when he grants the hero pagan immortality.

On the other hand, God is viewed as the source of supernatural strength in *David of Sasun*.¹⁰ It is He who orders and gives direction to the deeds and fate of people who are acting. And whatever occurs is shown not as fairy tale miracles but as the people's living faith.¹¹ The heroic strength given to the protagonists is granted by God as heavenly grace. They also have free will but remain as God's subjects, who are punished when they break their oaths (Great Mher, his wife, David). In the epic, in God's name appear angels and saints reminiscent of pagan gods. The archangel Gabriel is reminiscent of the pagan Grogh and Saint Sargis of the deity of storm.

Thus, the historic and the legendary, the Christian and the pagan are melded together and form a fictional harmony. The legendary itself has a contemporary significance for resolving important historical issues. One such example is water, which is viewed as the source of life and strength from which are born the epic's waterborn heroes who fight for the sake of national interests. Another is Hovan's voice, connected with the stories of heavenly thunder and of Tur Kaitzaki's origin—all of which aid in saving David and Mher from unavoidable dangers.

From a structural perspective, each cycle, while completing an important portion of the whole, itself remains as a separate work, embracing a definite historical period. Of these the most popular and widespread is the David of Sasun cycle, because the liberation battle against Msra Melik, the crux of the entire saga, is very intense, reaches the point of extreme tension, and is resolved with the victory of the realization of the emotions of the public. And although the idea of liberation is predominant in all the cycles which form the epos, themes of secondary significance are also distributed throughout the over fifty narrative versions. In them the historical is combined with the fairy tale and the legend, and various stories and episodes are created. These,

being subject to the exigencies of events, reflect the popular thinking and mentality of the era. Among such segments are Sanasar and Baghdasar's water-related birth, Great Mher's struggle against all kinds of evil forces, episodes of David's childhood, Tur Kaitzaki's power, the figures of Dzenov Hovan and Keri Toros, Little Mher and the killing of the forty demons.

The *David of Sasun* saga does not have a militaristic, dominating, or despotic spirit. It relies more on the power of trust, faith, goodness, and bravery for the liberation of the homeland. The fateful clashes of good and evil, the issues of duty and responsibility, and bravery and pagan heroism often save the protagonist from ultimate destruction. Daring becomes a quality which affects fate and has a contrary influence on destiny. These characteristics are reflected through the many figures who act in the epic and do not submit to the counsels of elemental mythological forces. These figures do have a clear conception of their goal, and although they have to go through exaggerated, imaginary situations to achieve it, they nonetheless bear the imprint of the character of the times and preserve their freedom-loving ideas.

The more than two hundred heroes who are found in the epic reveal the full range of their evil and good traits in action.

They have superhuman power, which is revealed during single-handed combats and wars. The positive figures generally are peace-loving and naive and view the world with a child's vision; they often act on intuitions and premonitions, always holding high their faith in truth and conscientiousness. Of course, not all the characters are earthly and human, historical and popular. There are universal and mythological characters (Janpolat Dev, Astghu Tsolatzin, dragons, and demons) and fully rounded fictional figures (Sanasar, Baghdasar, Tzovinar, Great Mher, David, Little Mher, Dzenov Hovan, Khandut, et al.), who have distinctly individual, often chivalrous characteristics that come out chiefly during those tragic circumstances in which they fall while living through their personal misfortunes. The protagonists of the saga, progressing from one generation to the next, reveal more and more real and natural traits. For example, Sanasar's son Great Mher, who is a mythological hero too, has a more human nature than his father, while his son David has an even more human nature than his father and grandfather. The historical and legendary conditions and episodes in which David of Sasun matures and acts turn him into the most heroic

figure of the epic, a figure who in Armenian reality carries the chivalric embodiment which Cid bears in the Spanish and Roland in the French peoples' life.

The shepherd youth is the worthy child of his superhuman predecessors, endowed with noble and charming humane ways and an unfettered and conscious conception of love of freedom. On the other hand, he is fiery and hot-blooded. That is why on the battlefield he accidentally kills his uncle Vergo and, unable to restrain his anger, curses his only son Little Mher to remain without an heir and immortal. In this respect, it is not amazing that for his intransigent, valiant soul and fearless acts he receives the name *tzur* (twisted, mad, cracked, crazy), an epithet which also applies to the other brave heroes of the saga. The people's strength is embodied in David who, always following the advice of the other figures, Dzenov Hovan, Uncle Toros, and the old woman, escapes from many adversities, receiving strength from the earth like the Greek Antaeus.

The right-minded and credulous, decisive and magnanimous David appears in the action of the epic with human traits, which enhance the artistic salience of his figure. Defeating Msra Melik, who incarnates the ancient characteristics of the oriental despot from Persian rulers to Arabian caliphs, from Seljuk destroyers to the bloody physiognomies of Genghis Khan and Timur Lenk, David is held up as a paragon embodying the Armenian people's strength and courage, like the Greek Achilles who is put forth as a collective national power and not as a distinct human individuality.

David's upright and simple soul has a broad conception and love of freedom. While still a child, he did not pass under the caliph's sword. Later, after settling accounts with Msra Melik, he sends back the latter's army peacefully to its land. On another occasion, ceasing the pursuit of the soldiers of the Bab (king or pope) of the Franks, he finds and destroys his chief enemy, promising the local people that in case of danger he will come immediately to their aid. David is good and handsome, unselfish and deferential. He rebuilds the Astvatzatzin (God-bearing Mariam) monastery of Marut and does not forget to pray to his God. As an individual, he is a fully developed fictional figure, with a rich inner world and an emotional and lyric soul.

The saga's heroines, Tzovinar, Karsun Chiugh Tzam, Armaghan, Khandut, and Gohar (Jewel), are moving poetic personas.

Three of them, Tzovinar, Karsun Chiugh Tzam, and Khandut, are powerful heroic characters, with distinct and independent temperaments. They are compassionate, noble, and possessors of lofty intellectual abilities.

Tzovinar is sensitive and smart, womanly and dainty, while Karsun Tzam, who is less feminine, has a strong will and is daring. She is not an Armenian and herself proposes to her future husband and rules the country after Sanasar's death.

Khandut is courageous and fiery, daring and freethinking. She not only fights David single-handedly with a man's bravery in order to test the latter's power and force but also runs in tears after the wounded David, sorrowfully beseeching him to forgive her. She has a sharp tongue and a burning and passionate love. Armaghan is a faithful and gentle figure, while Gohar is refined. All of them are subdued by their husbands in fights and battles and are thinking and acting individuals, not merely objects of affection. They are participants in the activities of their husbands and are faithful to them throughout their entire lives.

Uncle Toros, Dzenov Hovan, and the old woman who owns the millet field, are also unique figures. The latter with her intelligence, amazing presentiments, and wise advice plays a big role in David's life, attending all his actions. Similar figures, reminding one of mother goddesses, also exist in the mythologies of the Greeks and eastern nations.

The common people also appear in the epic. They have an active role in the lives of the heroes, encouraging or condemning them. There are the songs of Sasun's brides sending David to battle or greeting him and pictures of the people's joy or sorrow.

Satire, with its healthy and amusing elements, makes the work living and vital. It includes the comic acts of the madmen of Sasun, due to their naïveté and gullibility, the scene of Kozbadin's tax collecting, Thunder-voiced Hovan with his reverberating voice, and cowardly Vergo, with his weaknesses.

The saga has a compact structure. There are no redundancies and the actions and figures develop with great rapidity. In general it contains the wealth of the reciters' imaginations and is based on peasant mentality.

Variants exist in numerous dialects (Van, Mush, Shatakh, Alashkert, Moks, Ararat, etc.). They were conceived over centuries,

achieving simplicity of style without superfluous stylistic adornment and adjectival embellishment. The expressiveness of the epic is revealed through apt and striking portraits, analogies, syntheses, the personification of symbolic objects, and exaggerations. Positive or negative characteristics are concentrated, intensifying the power of heroism or magic while utilizing jokes and deadly sarcasm, animism, and nonsensical beliefs.

Actions affect directly through their emotional impact without the presentation of details, a characteristic which is similar to that of classical epics. Events progress with great epic force, and their narrative measure and rhythm change in accord with their development. A significant part of the saga's recitals are metrical. The style is plain and unadorned; the language is spiced with folk proverbs, sayings, and picturesque expressions. This makes the entire work moving, touching the Armenian nation's soul and sentiments. Such is Little Mher's conversation with his parents, Karsun Chiugh Tzam's declaration of love, and David's farewell speech to Tzovasar and his compatriots before leaving for battle:

O sisters, farewell,
 You have been sisters to me;
 O mothers, farewell,
 You have been mothers to me.
 Good neighbors, farewell,
 Farewell neighbors young and old.
 My close neighbors, I have troubled you much,
 Forgive me.
 Good housewives, whenever you bake bread,
 Remember David's name.
 Youths, you too, whenever you have fun,
 Remember David's name.
 My sisters, mothers, my good neighbors,
 Farewell.¹²

The saga's heroes are figures with legendary majesty; powerful, they are individuals endowed with inordinate strength and abilities. For the description of these characteristics the narrators of *David of Sasun* have resorted to colorful comparisons, metaphors, and repetitions.

One such example is the description of Khandut's beauty:

I see Lady Khandut's hands and feet are drawn with a quill,
Oh, truly they are drawn with a quill.
I see her nails are smoothed with a file,
Oh, truly they are smoothed with a file.
I see her hair is in forty braids,
Oh, truly it is in forty braids.
I see the redness of her face is that of pomegranate wine,
Oh, truly it is pomegranate wine.¹³

The scene of the last one-on-one encounter between David and Msra Melik is depicted imaginatively. In order to kill David, Melik travels for several days and rushing back, he delivers a blow so powerful that the earth shakes, and the sun cannot be seen through the clouds of dust for three days. David survives, and it's his turn. Fearing his retaliatory blow, Melik wraps himself in the hide of forty oxen, at the bottom of a deep pit, and covers it with forty millstones.

David relinquishes the first blow of Tur Kaitzaki, his sword, against Melik, because of the caliph's mother's supplications, and the second, for his sister's sake; but, he strikes the third blow with such force that his sword cuts through all the obstacles covering Melik and cuts him in two.

The fictional portrayal of the heroic world of past centuries also shows the refinement of existing oral poetry, the quality of vocabulary, and the *gusan* songs.

David of Sasun, as a folkloric creation, includes the legendary and the heroic as well as the way of life and the daily routine, and serves as a huge encyclopedia of Armenian folk life, beliefs, customs, mentality, and world-view.

The epic has been translated into many languages¹⁴ and has been the subject of literary endeavors (both verse and drama) by a number of Armenian poets (Hovhannes Tumanian, Grigor Palasanian, Levon Manuelian, Avetik Isahakian, Nayiri Zarian, Vagharsh Vagharshian, and others).

12. Medieval Armenian Prose

In the Middle Ages Armenian literature presented nearly all literary genres, including the epic, that existed in Europe and Byzantium at the time. While it is a literature of varied content, dramatic genres are not represented. Drama, that great glory of Greek literature, did not take root in Armenia. The exhilaration of the stage did not inspire Armenian writers, who were mostly churchmen, although much evidence demonstrates that theaters did attract the masses. The pleasures of the theater, however, were not understood by Armenian intellectuals in the Christian era, and it was criticized as “immoral” and art of low taste. Instead, in the Middle Ages, the lyric genres flourished. Armenian talent invaded the realm of poetry in everything from riddles, quatrains, and lyric odes to the epic.

Generally, in the area of literary genres, verse arises before prose. It was this way in Armenia, too, although very little has reached us from the oldest pagan songs. Prose, as a genre in the Armenian milieu, developed immediately after the creation of the alphabet. If poetry was the natural language of emotion and imagination, then prose begins with the first time scientific ideas are committed to writing, manifested in the fields of religion, rhetoric, philosophy, and history, which even in their earliest period (fifth century) display incomparable maturity, vitality, impressive style, rich language, and a capacity for logical and analytic thought. In the Middle Ages, the secularization of literature and culture caused Armenian prose to develop, including short narratives (fables, sayings, stories, tales, fairy tales), lives of martyrs, stories of miracles, eulogies, apochryphal works, exhortations, and biographies. This engendered a flexible narrative skill, the ability to express thought in prose, a lively style. Folk traditions, Armenian customs and habits, family and social relations, as well as intellectual interests provided unlimited material for these literary genres.

The aforementioned genres were not considered worthy of attention and were subject to little examination. Armenian and other scholars were more interested in the value of Armenian historiography and hagiographic literature than in medieval short narrative prose genres, except for parables, which formed quite a large number in ancient manuscripts. They are compositions of moral and ethical character and are used for didactic purposes, which was a definite part of the content of all of Armenian medieval literature, whether prose or poetry.

Tales, ranging in length from a couple of lines to a couple of pages with a beginning, a main theme, and a conclusion, were an important genre. Although the first examples of the tale emerged together with written literature, as a literary genre it underwent further development from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries. Tales were used for sermons and homilies as reinforcement of what the preacher was trying to convey in his talk.

The tales treat the good and bad aspects of human nature—humility, wisdom, religious duties, patience, love of parents, drunkenness, and greed. In this sense, tales often became combined with fables, sayings, and humorous anecdotes. The difference is that the idea of a tale is direct, while the parable is allegorical. On the other hand, on account of their pointed and salty content, tales take on a satirical quality and become comedic.

The tale is not a strictly defined genre in all respects. Under this rubric are sometimes understood lengthy stories, legends (*araspel*), fairy tales, and folk stories. Literary genres in these centuries are quite mixed and difficult to distinguish. In the late Middle Ages they expanded and became more like short stories. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tales appeared in collections and acquired a secular content.¹

These types of medieval short narratives were, in part, of Armenian origin and in part translations. Tales, which in nearly all instances do not have authors, are told by this or that person, embellished, amended, or condensed, making it more difficult to determine their place of origin or route of translation. Tales from other lands, which are translations or borrowings, are drawn from medieval collections: *Khratk vogeshah* (Spiritually Beneficial Advice), *Harants vark* (Lives of the Fathers), *Hayeli varuts* (Mirror of Life), *Kalila yev Dimna* (Kalilah and Dimna), the *Alexander romance*, the *Patmutiun yotn*

imastasirats (Story of the Seven Philosophers), *Gortzk hromayetsvots* (Gesta Romanorum), and other anthologies. These translations and transcriptions were often executed with such liberty that they were altered beyond recognition (the place, narrative style, names and even the theme was changed). They were adapted to local needs and departed from the original, creating diverse variants of the same tale. Such an example is provided by the well-known medieval Armenian tale *Vasn hpartutian* (On Pride), often recounted along with a sermon. It has numerous variants in Latin, the languages of India, and Polish, Russian, and other languages. In Armenian, the tale has nearly a dozen variants, with contrasting content. In several places it is tied to Solomon the Wise, in others with Nebuchadnezzar, or with the Armenian king Trdat, and sometimes, it expresses generalized content.²

Tales of Armenian origin are of both secular and religious nature. The latter are miracle narratives and related to the nation, the Armenian Church, and questions of dogma. Some of the secular tales relate to Armenian history and heroic events of Armenian forefathers. Among the medieval Armenian tales are those of Sargis Kaghzvantsi (seventh century), Vard Patrik (seventh century), Tornik (eleventh century), stories of General Liparit's campaigns for the Cilician kingdom, which, in written form, are included in the works of historians and chroniclers or in separate manuscripts (Ghevond Patmich, Arakel Davrizhetsi, Matteos Urhayetsi, and others). The characters in these historical tales are real people, the memory of whose heroic battles has been transmitted by the people from age to age. There are also tales of comic and salty content, funny situations and human foibles, which served as a form of entertainment and satire. Many of these bear elements of popular wisdom; they have a philosophical basis and are founded upon sayings and proverbs of the masses.

Here are some examples:

THE THIEF AND THE FATHER CONFESSOR

A certain thief was taken to the gallows. The father confessor exhorted him to death, saying, "How happy are you, dear brother, that hopefully you will today be seated at the banquet in paradise in the company of God and the angels."

And the thief answered, "Dear father, you would do me a great favor, if you would go in my place, for I am not hungry yet; and, it is not time for me to have dinner."³

Or:

THE SOLDIER AND HIS MOST HEAVY BURDEN

Once a soldier found himself on the high seas with his wife during a storm. He saw that the sailors were throwing everything that happened to fall into their hands overboard. Everyone was crying out, "Drop your heaviest load in order to save your life and escape from the sea, lest you be drowned at once with all your things." When he heard this, the soldier immediately took his wife and threw her into the sea, saying, "No burden is heavier and more unbearable for me in the world than my wife."⁴

These tales are short and concise narratives with an ending of purpose and generalization, whose language shows variety. If the subject was secular, the language is conversational and dialectal; whereas, if it has religious or ecclesiastical content, Classical Armenian predominated, or it had a rhetorical or elegiac style.

The subject matter of medieval tales is varied. They have historical, religious, and ethnographic content and relate to all classes of people: clerical, monastic, kings, palatine, the rich and the poor, the artisans and the merchants—their conceptions, conflicts, ideas, tendencies, occupations and ways of life. The themes which have lasted in oral form to be included in anthologies by Armenian as well as foreign writers, have become the material for literary creations and have been cultivated in different genres. Of these, *The Three Sons of the King and the Gem*; *The King, the Nephew, and the Prince*; *The Miser's Prayer*; *The Armenian Swimmer*; *Satan and His Seven Daughters*; *The Proud King*; *The Hermit*; and *The Soul-Seller* have been reworked many times and have served as the basis for works which have gained international repute. Hovhannes Tumanian's stories *Aghtamar*, *Golden Urn*, and *Satan and His Seven Daughters*, Avetik Isahakian's work *Satan and His Daughters*, and among international literary figures,

Voltaire's *Zadig*, Schiller's ballads, Tolstoy's *Father Sergei*, *The Proud King*, Goethe's *Faust*, and others have such origins.

One of the major genres of Armenian medieval prose was *hagiographic literature*, especially the lives of the saints and martyrologies. In this connection, valuable *vitae* were written in the eleventh to fifteenth centuries about famous spiritual, literary, and cultural figures, which tell not only about the individual and his works but also reflect events of the time and place, the ideas of the day, religious and political concerns. In this sense, during this period, fairly valuable hagiographic literature was created.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries interest developed especially in the copying and translation of ancient hagiography and martyrology. In the twelfth century the collection *Vark srbots harants* (Lives of the Holy Fathers) appeared, enriched by new translations and edited from early Christian writings. In the same century, Catholicos Grigor Vkayaser (d. 1105) gained reputation as a translator and editor who made numerous renditions from Greek and Syriac, wrote eulogies and sermons, *vitae* and martyrologies, receiving the epithet "Vkayaser" (Martyrophile).⁵ He reorganized and finalized the anthology *Tonamag* (Almanac), completing the cycle of feasts with forty-six new feasts, that is, with new readings eulogizing forty-six saints' lives and martyrdom. Grigor Vkayaser took part in the editing of *Haismavurks* and generally had a great influence upon the hagiography of his time.

In the eleventh through fifteenth centuries, alongside Byzantine and Syriac, translations of Latin works were also executed. The active and friendly relations between the Armenian, Greek, Syrian and Latin clergy in Cilicia and in Armenia under Byzantine rule contributed to these interconnections. In these times the great feudal dynasties of Armenia had solid relations with the Byzantine royalty which favored the mutual intellectual and cultural relations between these countries. Moreover, in the Black mountains of Cilicia, among the Armenian monasteries, there were Greek, Syrian, and Latin monasteries, which had free religious cooperation. Through these contacts, Armenians became aware of the ideas, style, thinking process, and literary genres of medieval Byzantium.

In the twelfth through fifteenth centuries, hagiography had become a "high" literary genre in the Byzantine world. Simeon Metaphrastes (tenth-eleventh centuries), who revised numerous

Byzantine saints' lives and martyrologies giving much room to lengthy spiritual talks, exhortations, prayers, and laments, is considered the father of this genre. As a result, events of the protagonist's life became unimportant, and the subject matter became more abstract. This approach is discernable in Armenian hagiographic works as well, presented in the form of *Haismavurk* collections.

The first editions of *Haismavurk*, made from the Greek, were assembled by Hovsep Konstandnupolsetsi in 991-992. This was succeeded by Ter-Israyel's edition, formed on the basis of the first, during the 1340s. Ter-Israyel summarized the *vitae* and martyrologies, condensed the subject matter, leaving out unimportant circumstances, admonitions, exhortations, prayers, and long-winded doctrinal passages.⁶ The third edition of *Haismavurk* belonged to the pen of Kirakos Areveltsi from 1253-69.⁷ The fourth edition of *Haismavurk* was done by Grigor Anavarzetsi (beginning of the fourteenth century),⁸ and the last, most widespread edition was by Grigor Khlatetsi Tzerents in 1401.⁹

As regards the hagiographic output of the eleventh through fifteenth centuries, it is necessary to say that these works, compared with those of earlier periods, are relatively plentiful. This abundance was favored, of course, by the general literary and cultural upswing and the focussing of ecclesiastical and doctrinal matters. On the other hand, during the centuries of Mongol-Tatar and Muslim atrocities when Armenia and its religion were being trampled, hagiographic works were enlisted to support the Armenian people through their spiritual and physical travails. Nevertheless, the martyrologies produced in the period at hand no longer had that literary content which made such works significant. Admonitions and scriptural descriptions were dominant and what became important were events of the martyrdom, such as those of Yezidbuzid, Davit Dvnetsi, Hamazasp, and Sahak.¹⁰

Several hagiographies and saints' lives after the tenth century take a eulogic-rhetorical form written by well-known authors (Grigor Khlatetsi, Arakel Baghishetsi, Grigor, and others).¹¹ In the realm of rhetorical hagiography, forewords and afterwords occupied an important place. Those hagiographies are striking for their poetically touching language, allegories, and metaphors. Among eulogic *vitae*, the extensive account of Nerses Shnorhali's life is notable, representing at the same time one of the outstanding achievements of thirteenth-century Armenian prose.¹² Armenian writers have treated Shnorhali's life and

works a number of times, the most thorough depiction being the aforementioned hagiography, written in 1240. Unfortunately the author of this work is not known. In any case, the author had great literary skill—clarity of expression and of thought. Eulogizing Shnorhali's meritorious legacy, the author sheds light on Shnorhali's Pahlavuni predecessors as well, the works of his talented brother Grigor III Catholicos and Grigor Vkasaser. The Cilician milieu endowed Shnorhali's religious and political activity with vitality and appeal, making the hagiography impressive and compelling.

Georg Skevratsi's *vita* is considered both a work of literary merit and a historically accurate primary source.¹³ This opus was included in abridged form in medieval colophons, while the full text was published in 1964.¹⁴ It is supposed that the *vita* was written from 1309 to 1317, by scribe Stepanos of the monastery of Skevra.

Georg Skevratsi's extensive *vita* illuminates the resentment of the intellectuals and clergy in Cilician Armenia with the idea of unification with the Roman Catholic Church and describes the persecution of clergymen opposed to the Unitores movement. The state of political and ecclesiastical affairs, the mores of the time, the efforts of King Hetum II and Grigor Anavarzetsi in trying to convert the country to Catholicism as well as their attempts to win over Skevratsi are portrayed with the convincing pen of an eyewitness.

In addition to rhetorical hagiographies, plain biographies were also written, composed in a simple, narrative style. Among them are those of Hovhannes Sarkavag (twelfth century),¹⁵ Stepanos Siunetsi (thirteenth century),¹⁶ Grigor Khlatetsi (fifteenth century),¹⁷ Tovma Metzopetsi (fifteenth century),¹⁸ Grigor Tatevatsi (fifteenth century),¹⁹ and others. These do not have extensive forewords but rather simple, generalized introductions, drawn from rhetorical hagiographies. Also presented here are often folkloric narratives, events, incidents, and anecdotal information about daily life. They are biographies written on a popular level in simple Classical Armenian language, which often leave the impression of a novella.

While the leading figures in hagiographical literature in the first period (fifth to tenth centuries) were usually members of the upper class, the leading characters in the works of the second period (twelfth to seventeenth centuries) were from the lower social classes—artisans, peasants, or clerics. The authors of these works were simple scribes for

the most part, who were eye-witnesses and well-acquainted with the events. These works were written in Middle Armenian and verged on memoirs in genre. As for the protagonists in martyrologies, they do not have the perfection of those of the fifth to tenth centuries, the ideological depth of their martyrdom, but are rather more everyday and human. The meaning of sacrifice had lost its teleological focus and had become secular and commonplace (forced marriages, conversions, tribute, etc.). Such are the martyrologies of Teodoros Kesaratsi (thirteenth century), Grigor Baluetsi (thirteenth century), Khosrov Gandzaketsi (twelfth century), Grigor Karnetsi (fourteenth century), and Davit Dvnetsi (twelfth century).²⁰ Beginning in the fifteenth century, hagiographies depart from their usual narrative form and classical structure. The fact of martyrdom is more emphasized than the description of its circumstances. Torture and death penalties are not presented in the former detail, and miracles and visions are no longer included.²¹ Instead, hagiographies of the late Middle Ages reflect historical, real life, human relations, which serve as material for historiography.

From the eleventh to fifteenth centuries the *hagiographic colophon* genre became widespread: *Grigor Narekatsi* by Nerses Lambronatsi (twelfth century), *Nerses Lambronatsi* by Samuel Skevratsi (twelfth century), *Grigor Tatevatsi* by Matteos Jughayetsi (fifteenth century), *Mkrtich Naghash* by Astvatzatur (fifteenth century), and others.²²

The authors, who for the most part are contemporaries of the figure described in the colophon, relate the necessity of writing the *vita* with the purpose of instructing succeeding generations and transmitting to them the biography of a perfect individual or saint. The author of a *vita* does not feel constrained to follow the rules of hagiography; rather he relays the events in a direct manner, reproducing his impressions and memories. These are known as hagiographic colophons, because the subject's life often becomes a testimonial depiction of his times. Astvatzatur, who wrote the *vita* of Mkrtich Naghash, tells about Naghash's acts and virtues, the mores and daily life of the city of Amid, construction of the cathedral, and finally about all those efforts on Naghash's part to help and ameliorate the conditions of the Armenian population of Mesopotamia.²³

Vitae and martyrologies, fairly uniform in structure, also form part of *Haismavurk*. They had various editors, who tried to summarize

them for the purpose of reading in church and present them with special introductions and endings more or less alike. In the *Haismavurk* edited by Grigor Anavarzetsi (thirteenth-fourteenth centuries) there are also excerpts devoted to Catholic saints, since he was a leader of the Unitores movement. And the edition by Grigor Khlatetsi, although abridged, was enriched with accounts of contemporary saints and martyrs as well as historical and geographic information. Examples are the *vitae* of Sts. Sahak Partev, Mesrop Mashtots, Yeghishe, Mashtots Yeghivardetsi, Grigor Narekatsi, and others found in *Haismavurk*.²⁴

Thaumaturgic narratives form an inseparable part of the hagiographic genre, relating the miracle worked by the saints or the supernatural powers possessed by them. They found their way into folklore, circulated orally and persisted among the people. Such legends include *Narekatsi* and *Karos Cross*. Thaumaturgic narratives are often described through visions, in which unfettered flights of imagination reach such heights and color that the apocalyptic writings become the basis for fantastic tales.²⁵ To this apocalyptic genre belong *The Revelation of St. Paul*, *The Revelation of the Mother of God*, and the visions of Gregory the Illuminator, Nerses Partev, Sahak Partev, Hovhannes Kozern, and others. *The History of St. Nerses Partev* by the elder Mesrop Vayotsdzoretsi, which earned the author a place in the history of Armenian letters, was held in high esteem in medieval literature. It is the *vita* of Nerses the Great, where the main subject is his vision of the future of Armenia. In the Middle Ages it was well known, appeared in abridged and extensive editions, and was used by historians and chroniclers (Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Vardan Metz, Stepanos Roshka, and others). The *vita* of Nerses the Great was even set in verse and reworked by Armenian poets of the Middle Ages.²⁶ Among those poetic versions are those of Arakel Baghishetsi and Hovasap Sebastatsi.²⁷

There was a custom among the Armenians, as well as the Greeks and Syrians as early as the fifth century, that scribes, collators, overseers, or patrons would write *colophons* at the end of manuscripts or in other blank spaces. The writing of colophons reached its height in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries and lasted into the eighteenth. These colophons are important primary sources for the history of Armenia and the Middle East. In contrast to historians, they are accounts written by eyewitnesses who tell of the crises of their day, the famines, epidemics,

wars, deportations, places of refuge, taxes, and rural customs or write about the scribe's own life or the manuscript.²⁸

Translations were also an important genre of medieval prose. In the ninth and tenth centuries the *vita* of Maruta Nprkerttsi and the martyrologies of Bardisho, Nerseh, and Ananun were translated from Syriac by Gagik, abbot of Atom Monastery. In the tenth century, Hovsep Konstandnupolsetsi translated the Byzantine *Menology*, which became the basis for the various editions of the Armenian *Haismavurk*.²⁹ In the eleventh century, translations were carried out by Grigor Magistros, who transcribed a series of Plato's works from Greek into Armenian and Euclid's *Geometry*; and, by Grigor's son, the Catholicos Grigor Vkayaser, who rendered numerous *vitae* and martyrologies. Nerses Lambronatsi assembled old and new translations to form the *Vark harants* (Lives of the Fathers) anthology and other works.

In Cilicia, practical works on medicine, agriculture, law, astronomy, and other disciplines were translated into Middle Armenian from Syriac, Greek, Old French, and Arabic. Many Syriac titles were transcribed such as the *Chronology* by Michael the Syrian, the *Commentary on the Psalms* by Daniel Salakhatsi, the *Homilies* and *Eulogies* of Hakob Srchetsi, and the *vitae* and martyrologies of Ephraem Syrus, Sargis the Commander, and Barsum the Hermit.

In the thirteenth century, translations were also carried out in the northern regions of Armenia. Simeon Pghndzahanetsi rendered from Georgian into Armenian *Theological Conjunctions* by Proclus Diadochus, *Spring of Knowledge* by John Damascene, *Steps Toward God* by John of Sinai, as well as *History of the Georgians* and the Greek *Book of Hours*.³⁰

* * *

Artistically, *fables* and anecdotes occupy an important place among literary genres. Fables (*arak*), being for the most part folk art, serve as a means for the worldly mind, language, real life, and relations to penetrate literature. Fables have a chiefly moralistic and instructional content and reflect upon human relationships and the ethical issues of the time. The entire dialogue in the genre compels it to conform with popular taste, popular thinking, language and, with some authors, is consciously modelled upon folklore samples.

Popular humor and witticism are most plainly expressed in the fables, which are observations drawn from daily life and imbued with satire. Political and economic conditions contribute social content to the genre, since the fable is seen as a unique weapon against injustice, expressing indirectly the attitude of the masses. Here the assistance of animal protagonists, which become unwitting weapons, is enlisted to express ridicule and criticism of evil, the rulers, and human foibles.

The casting of animals, a practice originating in southern Europe, in particular Greece—according to their individual traits and natures as allegorical models of good, evil, cunning, intelligence, foolishness, and laziness—is widespread not only among Armenians but also throughout the Islamic world. The prototypes of animal tales were introduced to the West from the ancient Indian anthology entitled *Kalilah and Dimna* or *Fables of Bidpai* (in Sanskrit, “Garataka, Damanaka”). In the Middle Ages, these fables were translated into numerous eastern and western languages and influenced European fabulists of later centuries including La Fontaine and Krylov.³¹ The influence of *Kalila and Dimna* on Armenian literature is indirect, through Greek translations, since it was not translated into Armenian in the Middle Ages, and only certain of the fables were included in the *Aghvesagirk* (Fox Book).³²

Armenians were familiar with the fable from earliest times, even in the pre-Christian era. Philological evidence confirms that there was affection and penchant for fables even in the Christian era, when people would gather and tell them for entertainment. There is little about them in Armenian documents. The religious nature of Classical Armenian literature completely overshadowed this secular legacy and allotted them no space in its pages. The fable was considered a work—commonplace and devoid of literary value—transmitted orally, and maintained through the centuries only in folklore. If cultivation and development of the fable, as a laic genre, was not possible in the height of religious monasticism, then secularization brought Armenian culture closer to the people and made possible the reflection of the varied and rich national heritage in literature.

Already in the fifth or sixth centuries, Olympian’s *Collection of Fables*, which included those of the famous Greek writer Aesop (fifteen were edited), and a book called *The Moralist* by an anonymous author,

about the characteristics of animals were translated into Armenian.³³ These were both well-liked and popular works in their time.

In Armenian literature the fable is evident as early as the fourth century, in the work of Pavstos Buzand and later Davit Anhaght, the philosopher (sixth century) in his *Definitions of Philosophy*, comments upon them, as do Movses Khorenatsi (fifth century), Tovma Artzruni (ninth century), Stepanos Asoghik (tenth to eleventh centuries), and others.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a genuinely Armenian tradition of fables as a type of instructive allegory was developed by Mkhitar Gosh and Vardan Aigektsi.³⁴ The majority of their fables are drawn from folk traditions, which were subjected to literary reworking and have reached us in various manuscripts.

From the Middle Ages many different kinds of chrestomathies have been preserved which, following Vardan Aigektsi's name, are known as Vardanian anthologies. Among them the *Fox Book* (also called *Book of Fables*) is known widely, containing more than 160 fables and instructional stories. There are also other manuscripts, *Maxims or Fables*, *Words of the Wise*, *Useful Stories*, etc., in which are found numerous instructive and moralistic tales.³⁵

In their literary form, fables were prose compositions, consisting of two parts: the first was the fable, while the second was the moral, which interprets the fable and draws the necessary conclusion.

The Armenian fable and its historical and literary merits have attracted famous researchers in the persons of Nikoghayos Mar, Manuk Abeghian, and Hovsep Orbeli.³⁶

Mkhitar Gosh

According to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Mkhitar Gosh was born in Gandzak (Eastern Armenia) around 1130. He received a religious education there and was ordained a priest. Wishing to continue his education, he studied with one of the leading scholars of the day, vardapet Hovhannes Tavushetsi and received the rank of *vardapet*. However, the thirst for knowledge drove Gosh to distant horizons. He appeared in Cilicia and, concealing his ecclesiastical rank, studied in Sev Ler Monastery under one of the monks. Once again ordained vardapet,

Gosh returned to Eastern Armenia and lived in Getik Monastery in the province of Kayen. After Getik Monastery was destroyed by an earthquake, Gosh founded the large and beautiful hermitage of Nor Getik, in 1191, with the direct assistance of Zakare and Ivane Zakarians. After his death, Nor Getik was named Goshavank.

Mkhitar Gosh enjoyed great respect and renown for his learnedness. His fame was so widespread that students from all over the country were eager to become acquainted with him and study under his tutelage. And thanks to his widely recognized authority and magnanimity, he was able to help and encourage his compatriots in literature, education, the church, and other fields; and through his close ties with the Zakarians—he was their father-confessor and adviser—he played a significant role in Armenian-Georgian relations.

Mkhitar Gosh died in 1213, selflessly working until the last day of his life, surrounded by his disciples and brethren, and was buried there in the monastery.

Nearly a dozen of his works on a variety of topics have survived, among which *Datastanagirk* (Book of Judgments) and the anthology of fables are most notable.³⁷

Book of Judgments is a collection of Armenian laws and statutes, compiled by Gosh in 1184, who entitled it *Girk Datastani*.³⁸ It is a collation of various laws and verdicts which, with its detailed examination of medieval Armenian life and mores and broad statutory scope, played an extremely practical role in its time.

The Mosaic Code, Armenian canon law, generalizations of Armenian local law and the Bible served as the legalistic source for *Book of Judgments*. It is evident that he availed himself of foreign sources but in every instance adapted the laws to Armenian reality, mentality, and demands of the times. As a book of canons defending the rights of the Christian East, *Book of Judgments* enjoyed wide circulation in Armenian Cilicia, Georgia, Russia, and in the Armenian colonies of Poland, Crimea, and Astrakhan on account of its humanistic content.

In Cilicia Smbat Sparapet, brother of the Armenian King Hetum, included *Book of Judgments* in a book of statutes entitled *On the Judgments of Kings*. In 1519, King Sigismund of Poland, approved Gosh's work for the Armenians in Poland; and in the eighteenth century, the Georgian King Wakhtang, used it in compiling the Georgian statutes. *Book of Judgments* even found its way into Russian legislation.³⁹

In Armenian literature Mkhitar Gosh is known as a fabulist. In this sense he was the first, if we do not count the riddle-proverbs of Shnorhali, which were more riddles than fables.

Gosh wrote 190 fables, drawing upon the Bible, Armenian oral tradition, Aesop's fables, and *The Moralist*. Following their example, he also wrote his own fables.⁴⁰

Fables, which have existed in Armenian popular oral tradition as a disdained genre, were not written down by churchmen, who in Armenian reality were the builders of literary art and science. It was necessary to have the breadth of intellectual background and world view of Gosh for the moral side of this minor literary genre with its force and influence to be appreciated.

The fables of Gosh were formed of two parts: the anecdotal narrative and the moral summary.

The author himself distinguished the following types of tales: the moral fable, the legendary fables, and the fictive fable. In these three types, the main character, in essence, is man; but, if in the first two, human faults and foibles are illustrated by the characteristic traits and activities of animals, birds, and plants—such as the fox for cunning, the wolf for foolishness, the rabbit for cowardice, the bear for simple-mindedness—then in the fictive fable, man comes forth through episodes of his own life and ways.

The admonitive segment of the fable is the suggestion of that important direction presented by the author as a morally and spiritually beneficial conclusion. It could have a religious or secular nature.

Gosh is first and foremost a moralist, a Christian moralist. For him the fable is an allegorical device for expressing religious and humanistic ideas, which all have the purpose of moral instruction. The secular is separated to one side and the religious to the other. He dealt in the same way with laws in *Book of Judgments*. But, in all instances, Gosh preaches virtue and truth, for which the fable is considered merely a weapon. Saplings, trees, flowers, vegetables, fruits, heavenly bodies, and a number of various animals come forth as characters, as well as human beings, kings, princes, clergymen, villagers, craftsmen, and others, who are aware of their situation and abilities. He places definitive relations between animate and inanimate entities, making the animals, shrubs and flowers speak and turning them into a forceful means of artistic allegorical expression.

Gosh's fables are varied in content. They treat various classes in society: the clergy, the upper class, and the impoverished; the human condition, satirizing the flawed aspects of life or lauding virtues. The legal and economic relations of the time are expressed in many of the fables—an innovation in Armenian literature. Social life and the nature of the ruling class are expressed in the following fable:

THE FISH AND THE KING

The fish were asked by their king why they eat one another's children. And they boldly said, "Because we learned that from you. Many came to you to pay homage and, swallowing them, you made them food for yourself." So they themselves became bolder in accord with that example.

This fable admonishes those who, acting in one way, drive others to more wickedness than less by scolding them. For it is more appropriate to advise by one's deeds than one's words.

"This is too much," said the king. And he returned to creatures on the land.⁴¹

As a person nurtured in the Christian spirit, Gosh inculcates obedience of subjects toward their masters and God.

In one of the fables, for example, he tells that the vegetables were protesting against their king that he did not allot space equally to them. One he sets down at home, another in a flower garden, and another in an orchard, while a few he left "as vile as wild fruitbearers" to be food for swine and trodden upon by beasts.... The king, hearing this, answered angrily, "Do you not know that not every one knows the king's plan, as they do not know God's. And if you are further impudent, I will punish you yet more." Terrified, they fell silent.

Then follows the moral conclusion, "The fable wants us to be wise, to be obedient to God and the king and not to complain about ineffable Divine Providence or the secret plans of kings ..."⁴²

Gosh also raises the opposite position, when in several of his fables he demands that kings and leaders be in turn good and that they not oppress or torment their subjects.

THE LION AND HIS BROKEN PAW

When the lion broke its paw, it complained to all the animals, "You are my subjects, for I am the King of the Beasts; why do you not make sacrifices now, that I might be healed?"

And they said, "For from you we have not gotten protection—not against the bear or the wolf nor any other beast. Moreover, you did not spare us. Rather it is worthy that we sacrifice to God for having visited this evil upon you."

The meaning of this fable is clear: "Evil secular and religious leaders, by tormenting those who obey them, do not protect them from the danger of others. And when evil befalls those who deserve it, we shall offer thanks to God, for it was not our doing."⁴³

From this it follows that the strong and mighty should not despise the weak and low, for the weak united can destroy the oppressive strongman. For example:

The Bear destroyed an ant's nest and ate it. The ants gathered their fellow bees and gnats, attacked, and stung the bear who, in order to rid himself of them, threw himself upon rocks and eventually died.

In another of the fables the offspring of a buzzard ask why their parents do not feed them with freshly hunted meat like the lion and the falcon but feed them instead the bones of the dead. Their parents answer that for that very reason they live long lives, since they do not attack animals ...⁴⁴

In another fable, evil is condemned:

THE PENITENT WOLF

An old wolf went to the flock and said, "I am penitent now. I made you very miserable and, for that reason, I want to come and sweep your house, that forgiveness might be granted, and to keep your young from other wolves." And the dogs rejoicing said, "Sin no longer as before." And, he waited until lambs had grown and began to eat them and tear them apart, until he was seen by the multitude and was killed.

The fable gives the following advice: not to believe hastily in the change of the bad for it has become natural through habit. The evil are drawn back to the same, being the children of destruction.⁴⁵

All those fables, in which Gosh used popular oral anecdotes and tales commonly told in his day, stand out with their pungent and cutting message. In them are reflected the true relations of various social classes, the faults of the clergy which testifies to the moral decline of the one-time monopoly of clerical service in this age of the rise of secular life. In another series of fables Gosh gives his idea of a wise and strong autocrat who could establish a centralized principedom.

As a medieval thinker, the foundation of Gosh's moralistic world view is the proclamation of truth and justice, the vitality of which he conveys to the reader by giving appropriate and distinctive examples in this concise genre. As universal truths, they have didactic and admonitory aims, expressed in a tight and uniform artistic form, putting the stress on the latter, on the admonitory. Although from the point of view of art they lack living images and descriptions of human nature and activities, nevertheless these fables are impressive and sharp. They have uniqueness of style and purity of language. They are the first prose writings in Armenian literature, in the sense of a literary genre, and Mkhitar Gosh the first writer of prose.

Vardan Aigektsi

The medieval anthologies of fables called "Vardanian," about whose author very little is known, are associated with the name Aigektsi. He was born in the village of Marata in the province of Tluk in Syria (the dates of his birth and death are not known) and received his education in Arkakaghin Monastery in Cilicia. He became a vardapet-preacher, settled in Aigek in 1210, and hence was called by the name Aigektsi.

Numerous copies of Aigektsi's *Armat havato* (Root of Faith) (1205) have been preserved. This work is a compilation of hagiographies on the anti-Chalcedonian position of the Armenian Church and is directed against the Chalcedonian influences which had worked their way into Cilicia in the thirteenth century.⁴⁶

Being a preacher, Vardan also wrote twenty-two sermons and five instructive epistles, in which he criticizes the negative sides of human nature on the grounds of Christian ethics, suggesting highly

humanistic values. And, in order to make his sermons more impressive, Aigektsi enlivens his sermons with fables and tales, by virtue of which they become fresher, more effective, and understandable. For this reason, parables, whose moral principles are drawn from the Gospels, have also been attributed to him. Moreover, he wrote fables of a more secular character, drawing upon the same moral principles. In Nikoghayos Mar's opinion, Aigektsi compiled, on the basis of his parables, a collection in which are found many fables by Aesop, *The Moralist*, and Eastern peoples.⁴⁷

The spread of the genre of fable and anthologies containing them was manifested in later centuries not by Aigektsi's activity but by the nature of the psychology and demands of the time. Comic and witty fables and enchanting fairy tales were told in these times orally, taught in schools, and increasingly found their way into the Vardanian chrestomathies. Various collections were compiled, nearly all of which were tied to Vardan's name, bearing different titles. Books of fables, compiled in the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries, besides Vardan's fables, contained various folk and literary tales, fairy tales, humorous anecdotes, and other folk materials, which were included at different times. One such anthology is the *Fox Book*, translated in the late Middle Ages into Arabic and Georgian and published in various editions. It was first published in 1668 in Amsterdam, and its name, *Fox Book*, spread far and wide after this edition by Voskan Yerevantsi. More than 400 fables have survived, the majority of which are attributed to Vardan Aigektsi.⁴⁸

The question of their origin and relationship to other fables is a difficult philological subject, undertaken by Nikoghayos Mar, in connection with *The Moralist*, the Bible, Aesop's fables, and eastern fables. In his study *Anthologies of Vardanian Fables*, thoroughly examining the most ancient Persian, Syriac, Arabic, and Georgian fables and tales of the Near East and, assuming the possible cultural connections between those peoples and Armenians, Mar reached the following conclusion:

In general the Eastern literatures, so rich in collections of fables, have had an insignificant effect on our literary monuments of the earliest period—almost none, compared to that of *Aesop* or *The Moralist*. It is as if the Armenian people, itself Eastern, was

not inclined to have anything in common with the East. Rather, enthralled by the West, it tried to mix in its blood what was foreign to itself.⁴⁹

Mar was inclined to explain Western influence by the Armenians' persistent effort toward adopting Christian teaching and civilization. An effort, which until the twelfth or thirteenth century did not include the recording of this important literary genre, the old samples of which probably reflected influences of Eastern fables. The attitude toward the West, and especially toward Greek literature and philosophy, was different. The fables of Aesop and *The Moralists*, known to Armenians from ancient times, were accepted and popularized in Armenia and were included in Vardanian chrestomathies.

The material in the book of fables attributed to Vardan Aigektsi was refined through the centuries, spreading wide, but not subjected to any essential changes. The language of the collections is the living language of the people, in vivid narrative style. While among fables written in Classical Armenian, there are some which in the course of time were converted to Middle Armenian, edited and set in the vernacular form. The everyday spoken language brought with it a secular spirit, which gradually drew the Armenian mind from the religious and reflected pictures of ordinary life and thought. Thus, the old anthologies bore an ecclesiastical stamp while, in subsequent centuries, they acquired content depicting popular relations.

The first trait characterizing the Vardanian fables is the depiction of social relations between the nobility and the poor, the clergy and the laity, the city and country folk, etc. "The Rich and the Peasants," "The Prince and the Widow," "The Church and the Mill," "Poorman's Prayer," "Small Birds and the Stork," "The Thieving Priest and the Widow," and "The Ox and the Horse" have such content. The conflicts of changing times and animosity toward the ruler were openly expressed. In this sense, the fable "The Prince and Widow" is exemplary.

THE PRINCE AND THE WIDOW

There once was a very evil and unjust prince, and there was a widow in the same city. The prince harassed her by demanding taxes.

The widow, praying, said, "May God keep him in peace." People went and told the prince that she was praying for him. The prince came and said. "I have not done good to you. Why are you praying for me?" She answered, "Your father was a bad man, and I cursed him, and he died. You rule in his place even more harshly and evilly. I am afraid that if you die, then your son will be even worse."⁵⁰

The poor class in Vardanian fables understands its strength and interests, which is allegorically expressed in "The Ox and the Horse." In this series the clergy earns the same popular reputation: there is not the former respect for or faith in the church or churchmen. People's world views and unshakeable beliefs had changed when the physical took precedence over the spiritual and was considered a need of the first order:

THE CHURCH AND THE MILL

The Church boasted of its holiness and said, "I am the temple of God and the priests and people come to me to offer prayer and sacrifice to God, and God is reconciled with the world and grants forgiveness for sins." Then the Mill comes and says to the Church, "What you say is just and true but don't forget my contribution, for I work day and night and labor so that the priests and people can eat, and then they come to you to pray and worship God."

The fable shows that there are in the world people who constantly work and labor, like the bee. And the kings and all the people eat their labors and then go to the church and bless and remember God."⁵¹

Or:

THE FOX AND THE PARTRIDGE

The fox took a partridge in its mouth and wanted to eat it. And the partridge said, "Biessed is God, who called me to his kingdom, that I might be rid of these evils. And then you, Fox, thank God and eat me. It will be a great reward for you." And the fox crouched and prayed to heaven and, opening his mouth, said, "I am grateful to you, good God,

who prepared for me this table of bounty." And the partridge was freed from his mouth and flew away. And the fox said. "O, stupid and foolish me, first I should have eaten then given thanks to God."

The fable shows that you should not count on things that are promised you and should not give thanks to anyone, until you have received them. And, if you are given water, take it into your belly at that very moment, for many offer and do not give what they say, O brother, and they are liars.⁵²

The greed and materialism of the clergy is ridiculed, exposing their moral faults. The priest steals a cow from a widow and hides it behind the curtain of the holy altar ("The Thieving Priest and the Widow"). The hermit fornicates without fearing God's judgment but flees in terror of the bull dog's attack and forswears his sinful ways ("The Monk and the Bull Dog").

Generally, popular understanding and the changes in life during the Middle Ages are reflected directly in the fables; that is, the genre of fable, having a more popular character, is flexible and has a tendency to express the vicissitudes of life. The centuries' old fervor toward the church and the Gospel was dispelled by the force of secular ideas, something which is more boldly manifested in such works of popular origin as Vardan Aigektsi's than in those of Mkhitar Gosh. These tendencies are expressed in "The Hermit and the Turkish Prince," "The Pastor and the Flock," and "The Poor Man, the Pastor, and the Gospel."

THE POOR MAN, THE PASTOR, AND THE GOSPEL

A poor man, wet and hungry, hears the words of a pastor in a church. "I was a stranger, and you took me in; I was naked, and you clothed me; I was hungry, and you fed me." Hearing this, the poor man rejoiced, thinking that they would help him and feed him. After the service, however, the pastor left and went away, and the poor man, realizing what the pastor had read was false, picked up the Gospel and threw it into the water and put a rock on it. When the pastor asked where the Gospel was, the poor man replied that he had taken it and thrown it into the water, for everything written in it was false. "I am a stranger, and you do not take me in; and I am naked, and you do not clothe me;

and I am hungry, and you do not feed me; and I am thirsty, and you do not give me water," he said.

The moral purpose of the fables also highlights human faults and weaknesses. They satirize greed, evil, pride, and jealousy ("The Eagle, the Partridge, and the Bug," "The Wolf, the Fox, and the Mule," "The Snake and the Farmer," "The Widow and her Son," etc.). Modesty, goodness, decency, and popular wisdom are praised ("Two Painters," "The Lion and the Fox," "The Reed and the Trees," "The Camel, the Wolf, and the Fox," etc.). Also depicted are the mores, life-style, popular entertainment, and market exchange in medieval Armenia ("The Bride, the Mother-in-Law, and the Father-in-Law," "A Woman's Art," "The Taciturn King and His Son," "Three Brothers and the Gem," etc.).

In the Vardanian fables an important role is assigned to animals, whose intellectualized characters are impressive and allegorically reflect human relations. The origin and spread of animal tales in Armenian literature which had taken place already in ancient times are explained by the influence of moralism. Among Armenian fables, those about the donkey, the wolf, and the fox are distinctive. Other characters are the dog, cat, lion, camel, and mule, as well as the eagle, stork, and crane, whose characterizations, however, do not have the generalized traits or the satirical force of the donkey, wolf, and fox.

The animals are presented according to characteristic aspects of their behavior: for example, the donkey as humble and stupid; the fox as cunning, experienced, deceitful, witty and crafty; the wolf as evil and simple-minded, traitorous, or miserable.

The existence and influence of popular Armenian animal tales helps explain why one of the most significant anthologies of Armenian fables is called *Fox Book*.

From the point of view of literary genre, the Vardanian series is not uniform. Among the fables are also found legendary tales, short stories and other narratives ("The King and the Snake," "Wine," "The Traps of Satan," "The Simple-minded Thief," "The Omniscient Man," "The Wanton Woman," etc.). Nevertheless, what is distinctive in this series of fables is that nearly every one is concise and compact, exhibiting a fairly well-developed form, free of any superfluous parts. The tight composition is saturated with wit and, in many instances, is presented without comments. Sometimes the interpretations become

redundant or do not flow from the content of the fable itself and serve only the author's suggestion.

Vardan Aigektsi's fables and medieval fabulism in general, as both popular and literary achievements, played an important role in the development of prose genres. Aigektsi's fables served as creative material for many nineteenth and twentieth century writers (Khachatur Abovian, *Diversion for Leisure Time*; Hovhannes Tumanian, *A Drop of Honey, The Degenerate Cuckoo*; Avetik Isahakian; Derenik Demirchian; Atabeg Khnkoyian, and others).

13. Armenian Culture in the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries

The fourteenth to sixteenth centuries constituted one of the darkest periods of Armenian history. In 1375 the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia was destroyed by the blows of the Egyptian Mamluks from the south and the Seljuks from the north; and, its last king, Levon VI, was taken captive by the Muslims.

Armenia was subjected to the raids of the Mongol-Tatar Timur Lenk and the invasions of the Turks and the Persians. After this, for over three hundred years, from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Armenia remained under Muslim domination.

Monasteries and schools were devastated, and the en masse emigration of the people started towards the Crimea, Astrakhan, Poland, Ukraine, and other lands. A new period of long-lasting struggle began, during which the Armenian Catholicosate sent petitions from Ejmiatzin to the Christian states of Europe, beseeching them for aid and protection.

There have been times of such terror during the characteristic rises and falls in the course of Armenian history that the continued existence of the Armenian nation and its culture became impossible. Its final efforts towards survival were suffocated in blood and flame; but, with amazing vitality, it again flickered among the ashes. And a short period of peace has been sufficient for it to consciously pull back together its existence, and build and create, to improve and construct.

On the other hand, the level of Armenia's social and cultural development has nearly always been higher than that of the barbarian tribes invading it. They, comprising only number and quantity, endowed with a passion for domination and plundering, have tried to annihilate an ancient culture which the long-suffering and persevering Armenian spirit created.

"Central Asian rule," wrote the historian Leo, "naturally was not able to introduce any progressive change in the understandings and beliefs of the Armenian people, since that rule represented only savage, destructive force and had nothing intellectual to impart to its subject peoples, except for murky religious fanaticism and worship of the

sword, which consecrated every sort of barbarity in the name of destroying the enemy's religion."¹

Such was the situation in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, when the people, bent down under the blows of life, nonetheless continued to struggle, with an unwavering impulse to perpetuate and protect its two-thousand-year-old culture.

During these centuries the *Fratres Unitores (Ordo Fratrum Unitorum S. Gregorii Illuminatoris)* played a fairly important role in the history of Armenian culture. The Unitores (meaning "uniters") were Latin preachers who in the beginning of the twelfth century had spread throughout the Near East to preach Catholicism. They were sent there by the popes of Rome with the goal of Catholicizing the eastern lands. This mission took on greater dimensions during the days of Pope John XXII (1316-1334), when the latter, in 1318, divided Asia with its huge expanses between the Franciscans and the Dominicans. The Franciscans and Dominicans founded their centers in the countries of the East, and through the persistent efforts of numerous missionary preachers tried to Catholicize the local population, utilizing various effective means. They carried out zealous scholarly and literary activities in Cilicia and Armenia with the goal of spreading Catholicism. They translated theological literature, sermons, and exegeses into Armenian, and created philosophical and historiographical works. Even to this day the scholarly merit of the literature produced by the Unitores has not been sufficiently elucidated in the history of the culture of medieval Armenia.²

The Cilician Armenian Kingdom, involved in a struggle for survival at the end of the thirteenth century with the Mamluks of Egypt and Syria, and the Seljuk Turks established in Asia Minor, looked for salvation to the notables of the Catholic Church in Europe. The latter promised to organize crusader expeditions to save the Armenians from Muslim oppression. In exchange for this, the Armenians had to give up their national religious traditions and become Catholic. The matter was quite delicate because it touched upon the Armenian national Church and its beliefs. Bitter clashes took place about this between the Cilician Armenian aristocracy and the clergy of Armenia proper. The latter opposed Rome's plans of Catholicization and instead tried to strengthen the creed and independence of the Armenian Church.³

The Franciscan and Dominican orders, nevertheless, sent their Latin preachers to the populous centers of Cilicia and Eastern Armenia, in order to carry out their work of agitation. The Franciscan monks expanded their activity in Cilicia in the twelfth century. They found many adherents there and established their headquarters at the city of Sultania. Grigor Anavarzetsi (1293-1307) and Kostandin III Kesaratsi

(1307-1322), Armenian Catholicoi of Cilicia, found it necessary to accept the Catholic creed, believing that papal authority would aid the Armenians in shaking off the Muslim yoke. The Armenian Catholicoi based at the capital city of Sis believed in the Latin policy; while the bishops of Siunik, religious leaders of Armenia Major faithful to the traditions of their national church, criticized the Latinomania and proposed moving the seat of the Armenian Catholicosate to Armenia proper. Yet even in Armenia Major believers in the idea of rapprochement with the Roman Church existed. Among these were the members of the Monastery of Apostle Tadeos and the School of Tzortzor in the Artaz county of Vaspurakan province.⁴ The Monastery of Tzortzor was the cultural center of the Armenian principality of Artaz. Founded by Bishop Zakaria (1298-1347), it became a place noted for literary and translational activity in the fourteenth century. Thus, Bishop Zakaria was given the epithet Tzortzoretsi ("of Tzortzor"). Bishop Zakaria and *rabunapet* (monastical chief teacher) Hovhannes Tzortzoretsi, together with a group of Armenian and European Unitores, carried out translations of the works of famous Western ecclesiastical authors. Members of the Franciscan order, Fra Pontios and the Armenian *vardapet* Israyel who edited Pontios's Armenian translations, also worked here. Among the works completed by Fra Pontios, the translations of Nicholas of Lyra's *Exegesis of the Gospel of John*, the Franciscans' great ideologist Bonaventura's work *Legend of Saint Francis*, the ceremonial book *Sermon on the Blessed Sacrament*, and other works are noteworthy of mention. A portion of the work *Liber Sacramentorum* by Thomas Aquinas was also translated at the Tzortzor school. Despite all this activity, the Tzortzor school was already living through its twilight years around the middle of the fourteenth century, though it continued to exist until the end of the seventeenth century as a monastic establishment.

The Krna Monastery of the Nakhijevan region, where Dominican preachers played an important role, was the second important center of the Unitores movement in Armenia. Among these preachers Maragha's Latin Bishop Bartholomew (Bartholomaeus)⁵ of Bonona, who in 1330 moved to Krna and appears in the history of Armenian culture as the ideological leader of the Armenian Unitores, is quite a singular individual. The Unitores scribe Mkhitar Aparanetsi describes the founding of the Krna School and the activity carried out by Latin Bishop Bartholomew in Maragha in his volume *Girk Ughghaparats* [Book of the Orthodox].

Bartholomew of Bonona was a learned and able bishop "who joined to religious erudition knowledge of physical science as well as

astronomy . . .,” writes Ormanian.⁶ In this respect Bartholomew, student of Thomas Aquinas, belonged to the school of the famous theologian Albert the Great (1193-1280) in which, alongside religious questions, the natural sciences were considered worthy of attention. Armenian intellectuals had a need to learn about all this. The influence of translations made from Greek in previous centuries had been assimilated in Armenia a long time ago. The medieval Armenian mind was perhaps anchored to the ideas of classical and early Christian works, whose source was primarily Byzantine culture. But Byzantinism was not just the culture of the ancient world. It also embraced the new values and understandings of Western civilization of which Armenians were not aware. In content, it was a new reality, promising to revive the best traditions of the ancient world. The Apostolic Armenians, though with painful shocks, accepted the new, and immediately set to work assimilating the works of the Latin scholastics, which the Armenian and European Unitores scholar-theologians were presenting to them. If the Apostolic Armenians refused and persecuted the Unitores from a confessional point of view, it is also a fact that they read and augmented their works and translations.

Hovhannes Krnetsi (ca. 1290/92-1347) played a big role in the foundation of the church of the Armenian Unitores and in the intense translational work in the village of Krna. He became the leader of the School of Krna and the theoretician of the Unitores. He had studied at the University of Gladzor, became a pupil of Yesayi Nchetsi, and on the latter's suggestion left for Maragha in order to become acquainted with the teachings of the Latin theologian Bartholomew of Bonona. Not long thereafter, in 1328 he left the Armenian Church and accepted Catholicism. There he studied Latin and taught Bishop Bartholomew and his coworkers Armenian. After remaining one and a half years in Maragha, Hovhannes Krnetsi moved to the Yernjak area to his ancestral village of Krna, and erected a church near Krna's monastery.⁷ In 1330 he called a conference at Krna in which twelve vardapets participated, as well as Bartholomew with his preachers. It was decided that they, with their faithful followers, must cut their ties with the Armenian Church and accept Catholicism.⁸ Hovhannes Krnetsi left for Rome in 1333; and, after he returned, was appointed the spiritual leader of the Yernjak area and remained in Krna in that office until his death. He also wrote and translated many works there about which we do not have much information. The most famous work known of Hovhannes Krnetsi is the *Hamarot havakumn haghags Kerakanin* [Short Compendium on the Grammarian], which was copied after his death by Armenian Unitores brothers in the city of Kaffa in the Crimea.⁹ It is also known that

Hovhannes Krnetsi translated the section on the seven sacraments of the church in Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*. His epistle, entitled *Armiabaniel yeghbarsn Hayots* [To the Cenobite Brothers of Armenia], which presents the history of the formation of the Unitores church in the Yernjak area, is valuable from the historical as well as theological points of view.¹⁰

Armenian and European *vardapets*, including Bartholomew of Bonona, Peter of Aragon, Hovhannes and Hakob Krnetsi, and John Anglus (the Englishman), participated in the Armenian Unitores brotherhood established at Krna. They translated or began to write in the Armenian language books of rites: Missal, Breviary, Diurnal, books of dogmatics, prayer books, canons, and so forth. Through their efforts books of sermons, law books, theological exegesis, and works on philosophy and natural science were also produced.

As has already been mentioned of the Latin Unitores, Bartholomew of Bonona (d. 1333) had an influential position at Krna, and was followed by Peter of Aragon, who worked here until the end of his life in 1347. Their most important translations, with those of the abovementioned Armenian and European Unitores, are as follows: *Liber Sex Principiorum* of Gilbertus Porretanus or Gilbert de la Porrée (1076-1154) and *Summa Theologiae* by Albertus Magnus (1193-1280), translated by Peter of Aragon and Hakob Krnetsi. Hovhannes Krnetsi, John Anglus, and Peter of Aragon, with the aid of Hakob Targman ("the Translator"), translated different parts of *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). Among the works of Bartholomew which were translated are: *Girk i vera yerakuts bnutiants yev mi andznavorutian i Kristos* [Book on the Two Natures and One Essence of Christ], *Girk dzhokha* [Book of Hell, by Hovhannes Krnetsi], *Hamarot havakumn ... i dialetiken, vor e tramabanutium* [Concise Compendium ... of Dialectics, which is Logic], by the author himself, *Haghags vetsoria gortzots ararchutiann* [On the Six-Day Creation], and books of sermons which Hovhannes Krnetsi translated.

Hakob Krnetsi translated Peter of Aragon's *Girk datastanats havakial est kanonats yekeghetsvuin Hrovma* [Book of Judgments Collected According to the Statutes of the Church of Rome], *Hamarot verlutzutium Storogutiantsn Aristoteli* [Concise Analysis of the Categories of Aristotle], *Verlutzutium i vera grotsn, vor kochi Periarmanias* [Analysis of the Books Called Periarmanias], *Hamarot havakumn i vera neratzutian Porpiuri* [Concise Compendium on Porphyry's *Eisagoge*], and many other works. Nerses Palianents of the Armenian Unitores settled in the French city and ecclesiastical center of Avignon in the 1340s and translated from Latin to Armenian Martin of

Troppaus's (Oppavia) *Chronica Pontificum et Imperatorum*, which presents the concise history of the rule of the popes of Rome.

These theological, ritual, historical and philosophical works translated into Armenian, created within the Unitores environment, were to serve Catholicized Armenian clerics and communities. However, soon they emerged from the narrow circles of the Unitores and spread to the educational and scholarly centers of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Armenian clerical upper class paid great attention to those works. The reason for this was first of all their interest concerning the Western world's ecclesiastical organization and theological epistemology, of which the Armenian clergy was not informed. Second, these works condensed knowledge inherited from the ancient world concerning Greek and Hellenistic culture, Arabic and Hebrew translations, and Latin religious literature, which Europe in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries had collected through its renowned church fathers. They communicated new information about ancient Greek philosophers, as well as on man's origin, the structure of the universe, and various questions of natural science. "From the point of view of cultural progress, the Unitores brotherhoods," writes Henri Gabrielian, "played approximately the same role among us in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries as the Mkhitarist brotherhood was to do later. The fathers and historians of the Armenian Apostolic Church remember the Unitores with curses. But, do they bless the memory of Mkhitar, whose historically positive cultural role it is not possible to deny? Of course, the Unitores's translations were chiefly of scholastic authors. But they too, in certain ways, became sources to be studied by our medieval thinkers. They shook the Armenian Church's self-contained stagnation and forced Armenian clerics to understand that Greek language and culture were not enough to keep up with contemporary intellectual movements, that it was necessary also to come into contact with Latin culture and adopt its positive sides ... Rabuni, Vorotnetsi, and then Tatevatsi became the first Armenian philosophers who understood that and took the path of extensively using the positive results of European thought."¹¹ Nonetheless, many of the fathers of the Armenian Church came out against the Latin confessional movement. Many pupils studied in the schools that Maghakia Ghrimetsi established in Aprakunis (1369) and afterwards in Astapat, who, after attaining the rank of *vardapet*, would challenge the Unitores; a battle led first by Hovhannes Vorotnetsi, and later Grigor Tatevatsi.

Tatev, Noravank, Gladzor, Aprakunis, Astapat (Karmir Vank), and other monastery schools were still operational in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.

During the period of Mongol destruction, the province of Siunik was in relatively good terms thanks to the supple diplomacy of local Orbelian princes. For that reason, the universities of Gladzor (1280-1338) and Tatev (1345-1415), founded in Siunik, were able to become centers of philosophy and culture.

The University of Gladzor, called by contemporaries the "Second Athens," was located in Vayots Dzor and produced 350 *vardapet*-teachers. The length of study was seven to eight years, after which the graduates received the "staff of the *vardapets*"—in other words, the right to teach.

NERSES MSHETSI (beginning of the thirteenth century to 1284) and *YESAYI NCHETSI* (1260/65-1338) were founders of the University of Gladzor. This was a liberal arts university, where the craft of writing, miniature painting, and music (notation) were studied; and grammar, literature, oratory, theology, philosophy, and the science of calendars were taught. The university had progressive academic programs, wise and knowledgeable teachers, and bestowed academic degrees presented after the defense of theses.

The University of Gladzor played an especially important role in the development of Armenian miniature painting as synthesizer of the art of Cilicia and Armenia proper. The renowned miniature painters Toros Taronatsi and Momik worked here. Their students copied, painted, and annotated many Armenian manuscripts which endure as marvelous monuments of medieval Armenian miniature painting. Yesayi Nchetsi became known as a great philosopher, the "invincible orator," and taught and administrated for a long time at Gladzor, training many talented and noted students. They include Hovhannes Archishetsi, Mkhitar Yerznkatsi, Hovhannes Vorotnetsi, and Hovhannes Yerznkatsi. Yesayi Nchetsi wrote the textbook *Verlutzutiun kerakanutian* [Analysis of Grammar], and many works of a religious nature.

The University of Tatev, founded in the ninth century and functioning until the fifteenth, was another renowned school of higher education. It became a smithy of knowledge, where a famous group of scholars and pedagogues studied: Hovhannes Vorotnetsi, Grigor Tatevatsi, Arakel Siunetsi, Matteos Jughayetsi, Hovhannes Kolot (Hovhannes "the Short"), Georg Yerznkatsi, Grigor Khatetsi, Tovma Metzopetsi, and others. The University of Tatev, where the natural sciences were also studied, paid special attention to classical philosophy.

HOVHANNES VOROTNETSI (1315-1386) was an aristocrat by birth, son of the grand prince Ivane, of Siunik. He received his education at the University of Gladzor, and towards the end of the 1340s moved to the monastery of Vorotan, whence he received the surname Vorotnetsi.

He is known in medieval Armenian literature as a theologian, philosopher, headmaster, and Latinist. Hovhannes Vorotnetsi struggled against the Unitores and strengthened the position of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Eastern Armenia. He composed studies on the works of Greek classical philosophers, among which of particular interest are the commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*, and the works of Philo of Alexandria and Porphyry. Along with performing scholarly research, Vorotnetsi lectured in the monasteries of Daranaghi canton, as well as Tatev and Aprakunis. He himself was founder of the University of Tatev and the academy of Aprakunis, and had many disciples and followers.

Hovhannes Vorotnetsi's student *GRIGOR TATEVATSI* (1346-1409) was one of the widely known philosophers and theologians of his time. He was a scholar and a lecturer, an energetic clergyman and preacher, whose name was connected with the universal great reputation of Tatev University. He worked for about twenty years at Tatev "in bitter, gloomy times." An earthquake in Siunik, added to the wars of Timur Lenk and his successors, devastated Vaspurakan and Siunik. Not being able to withstand the horrors, Tatevatsi went to the Monastery of Metzop and founded its academy in 1408. It quickly became a home for the art of scribing.¹² In order to make up for the great losses in manuscripts resulting from Timur Lenk's invasions, old and new works of Armenian literature were multiplied here, learned and able scribes were trained, and the grammatical and theoretical principles of the craft of scribing were compiled. In 1409, when Grigor Tatevatsi left Metzop, Grigor Khlatsi was appointed the school's *rabunapet*. Tovma Metzopetsi succeeded him in 1410.

Grigor Tatevatsi was one of the most talented and prolific of medieval Armenia's philosophers. He played a significant role in the advancement of traditional Armenian thought. Ormanian has written that "at present all the *vardapets* of our church are considered the moral progeny of Tatevatsi ... and Tatevatsi is accepted as the paterfamilias of *vardapets*, or, by Metzopetsi's expression ... *the second illuminator*."¹³ Such characterization is no exaggeration. Tatevatsi has left an irreplaceable legacy in the spread of Armenia's culture and enlightenment, and the introduction of European thought in Armenian intellectual circles, shaking loose fossilized religious thought. His erudition in Latin and his detailed knowledge of the works of Latin theologians aided Tatevatsi in defending the orthodox Armenian Church against Catholicism in the manner of the Unitores. A rich literary heritage of his works endures, including *Hartsnants girk* [Book of Questions], *Girk karozutian* [Book of Preaching], *Voskeporik* [Golden

Treasury], *Hamarot tesutian i girs Porpiuri* [Concise Theory of Porphyry's Writings], explications of the works of Aristotle and Davit Anhaght, and numerous theological works. As a theologian, conducting the exegesis of Christian doctrine, Tatevatsi often brought classical philosophical concepts and explications to bear, providing unique explanations. Through the mutual relationship of faith and intellect, he separated the fields of philosophy and theology, that is, the two aspects of truth. Theology, according to him, had to do with matters of faith and has no connection to science, while the latter had nothing to do with faith. He viewed nature as a source for research in philosophy and science. However, for Tatevatsi, science should never cross the bounds of belief. God is the beginning of all existence, while the four elements he created, air, fire, water, and soil, are eternal. And if one being disappeared, then another came forth and thus in continuity. Of more interest are his epistemological conceptions. Knowledge and virtue are not inborn but obtained, while healthy sensory reception is the basis of recognition, upon which rationality rests. It is for this reason that he allotted such a large role to the teacher in the business of child pedagogy, whom he pictured as an able, dedicated individual with an immaculate way of life. He saw the cause of the destruction of the Armenian state not in the ancient formula of sin and the punishment of God but as due to the selfishness of Armenian *nakharars*, who were incapable of solving national problems. Tatevatsi considered the discussion and resolution of issues having a common interest to be an all-national matter generally, in which not only the princely class but the entire people had to participate. He also expressed unique ideas on social and economic issues, and on human psychology introducing novelties to Armenian traditional thought, thus aiding in the demolition of the fettered medieval mentality. It is unfortunate, however, that the seeds such a great thinker and his immediate predecessors sowed did not sprout and develop in the Armenian environment as a result of unending ravages. Their introduction under well ordered and favorable conditions would have provided a transmissional bridge of concepts for the coming centuries and expedited the disappearance of medievalism, as it occurred during the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries among the European peoples. However, political conditions deteriorated in Armenia and after Tatevatsi until the eighteenth century Armenian life underwent a steep downturn.¹⁴

During the centuries under discussion, due to the serious political problems of the country, several fields of culture experienced a decline. Armenian monasteries, which for centuries served as educational centers, were partially closed, and the teaching of the natural

sciences ended. Medicine, however, was an exception. The fifteenth century produced the famous physician *AMIRDOVLAT AMASIATSI* (1420/25-1496), who left many medical tomes written in an accessible language, including *Ogut bzhshkutian* [Benefits of Medicine] and *Angitats anpet* [Useless For the Ignorant].

The historiography of the aforementioned centuries is also not a rich one. The most famous of the historians of the period is *STEPANOS ORBELIAN* (ca. 1250-1305), the prelate of Siunik. Being a member of that land's princely family, he received a fundamental education, was ordained bishop in Cilicia and, coming to Armenia, to Siunik, played a significant role in local spiritual, political, and cultural life. He combined the dioceses of Tatev and Noravank, unified the discordant clergy, reconstructed the ruined Monastery of Tatev (1297), and contributed towards making the University of Gladzor flourish.

To his pen belongs the famous work *Patmutiun nahangin Sisakan* [History of Sisakan Province], the extended poem *Voghb i dimats Katoghikein* [Lament On Behalf of the Cathedral], and *Zhamana-kagrutiun* [Chronicle].

The work *History of Sisakan Province*, with its scholarly and analytic composition and broad range of subject matter, is a valuable primary source not only for Armenian history but also for the countries of the Near East.¹⁵ It is the story of the origin of the Orbelian clan, which Stepanos begins in the distant past and continues up to his days. While doing this, he provides abundant evidence not only about Siunik but also on all of Armenia, Cilicia, Mongol raids and rule, neighboring countries, and on Georgia and the Zakarians. The composition of all this led him to early medieval archives, the works of Armenian and foreign historians, popular and ecclesiastical writings, and traditions.¹⁶

TOVMA METZOPETSI (1378-1446) presents the history of Timur Lenk's expeditions as written by an eyewitness with patriotic spirit. *Patmutiun Lank-Tamura yev hajordats iurots* [History of Timur Lenk and His Successors], which he wrote from 1430 to 1440, is one of the rare works of the fifteenth century recounting the massacres, tributes, enslavement, and profound destruction that occurred during the days of Timur Lenk and his successors. The information he imparts about Armenia's scholarly centers, Tatev, Gladzor, and Aprakunis, is also remarkable. His epistles, *Hishatakaran* [Memoir] about the transference of the Armenian Catholicosate's seat from Sis to Vagharshapat, and *Haghags imastutian anvarzh tghayots usman* [On Instructions of the Education of Unversed Youth]—considered to be the first textbook for the teaching of the Armenian language—are valuable works in the legacy which has reached us of Tovma Metzopetsi.¹⁷

The start of Armenian printing by Hakob Meghapart in 1512, in Venice, was a significant accomplishment in sixteenth-century Armenian life. Hakob Meghapart published the first Armenian book, *Urbatagirk* (a collection of prayers and magical texts to ward off sickness and evil), followed by *Pataragatetr* [Missal], *Aghtark* (an astrological work, literally "Stars"), *Parzatumar* [Calendar], and *Tagharan* [Songbook].

In 1567 Armenian printing was established in Constantinople by the scribe Abgar Tokhatetsi. Centers of Armenian printing were also established in New Julfa, Amsterdam, Rome, Paris, London, Lvov, Jerusalem, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Tiflis, Ejmiatzin, Yerevan, and elsewhere.

The printing of books greatly aided the advancement of Armenian enlightenment work, rescuing specimens of Armenian literature, and advancing knowledge. On the other hand, the copying of Armenian manuscripts continued. They, in accordance with centuries-old tradition, were reproduced many times over by scribes, disseminating Armenian historical, scientific, and artistic achievements. As invaluable relics, they were preserved in monasteries and in inaccessible mountain hiding places. However, during centuries-long, inexorable struggles for survival, Armenian manuscripts were often burnt and destroyed by hordes of numerous barbarian tribes. Just in Siunik's Baghaberd fortress, the Seljuks burnt more than 10,000 manuscripts in 1170. Despite all this, more than 25,000 manuscripts now found in different places in the world have been saved and have reached us today. More than 10,000 are in Yerevan's Mashtots Matenadaran, about 4,500 in Jerusalem's Saint James Monastery, and the rest with the Mkhitarians of Venice and Vienna, as well as in the world's great libraries, such as the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, the British Library, the New York Public Library, in Leningrad, Tiflis, Berlin, Los Angeles, and many other places.

14. Medieval Lamentations (Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries)

Armenia's tragic historic fate engendered one of the greatest emotions, patriotism, enhancing the development of national consciousness. Normal life and revitalized ideas were permanently altered after the destructive invasion of the Seljuks beginning in the mid-eleventh century; the upward progression of social and cultural relations was interrupted; and the prevailing atmosphere of *joie de vivre* was converted to one of lamentation. People who had lost political independence and their fortune, both in their homeland and outside of it, lived with one concordant idea—patriotism and a yearning for the homeland—expressed in lamentations created after the eleventh to twelfth centuries, in turn becoming prototypes of patriotic songs in Armenian literature.

Lamentations, which can be prose or verse, form a special genre of medieval literature and are connected with the political downturns and upheavals of the era.¹ These are lyrical creations often called *boems* and are replete with sorrowful feelings and sombre moods; they intend to console and show faith toward the future.

The roots of this literary genre are very old. They extend to the pagan era, as far as the *laliats yerger* (Songs of Wailing) and continue through the Christian era, influenced by themes from the Old Testament (Jeremiah's *Lamentations*, David's *Psalms*, Solomon's *Song of Songs*). The Armenian *voghb* corresponds to the Greek Θρήνη, the German *die klage*, and the Russian *plach*.

In the pagan era, and afterwards as well, during rites of burial and ceremonies of mourning, songs of wailing were sung, performed by lamenting women, their hair disheveled and their feet bare, beating their knees, bloodying their breasts and faces, and tearing out their hair. Armenian historians Buzand, Khorenatsi, Mandakuni, Draskhanakertsi,

and others provide information on this phenomenon. In ancient writings these songs have been called "lament," "song of lamentation," "lament of tears," and "poetry of wailing." The Christian Church campaigned against the tradition of mourning and lamentation that came down through the ages; nevertheless, that tradition survived for centuries. So the genre of lamentations, which has literary merit, was patterned after these emotional and potent songs of popular lamenters.

The correlations and affinity of historical lamentations with the oral tradition of laments are apparent both in Shnorhali's *Lament for Edessa* and Narekatsi's *Book of Lamentations*, a section of which is even rendered in the pattern of poetry of wailing called *hairen*, in the *i* rhyme (lines of fifteen syllables).

Although this literary genre includes certain elements of folk laments, it is different in nature and scope. It may be dedicated to a famous national-church figure or a tragic occurrence in the life of the people, wars, invasions, and various disasters, the lamenting of which is disengaged from bounds of the familial or local and is viewed as multifaceted, as a tragedy of national significance.

In Armenian literature lamentations have appeared in works of historiography, as elegiac segments, and were, until the twelfth century, written in prose (Movses Khorenatsi, Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, Aristakes Lastiverttsi, Grigor Magistros, Arakel Davrizhetsi, and others); they also appear as a distinct genre, mainly verse (Davitak Kertogh, Narekatsi, Shnorhali, Khachatur Kecharetsi, Stepanos Orbelian).

Several types of lamentations exist—among them, the personal-lyrical, related to personal emotions, man's fate, or his psychological state. These have been reflected in prayers and especially *sharakans* of "repentance." The best example of personal lamentations in Armenian medieval literature is Narekatsi's *Book of Lamentations*, where the author, as a repenting individual, appears with a penitent's profound honesty, with awareness of the tragedy of the human condition and with unimaginable piety adheres to the hope of salvation. Similar feelings are characteristic of many other writers of that time and society, and have been expressed in medieval "laments." These individuals sought the causes of personal tragedy solely in their own lives, in their own behavior, in the depths of the eternal opposition between body and soul.

The following are also a distinct group: funeral (sepulchral) lamentations, lament-colophons, as well as hagiographies (prose and verse), wherein the persistent struggles by exceptional national-religious figures for the sake of Christianity are expressed.

In an artistic sense, among medieval lamentations, the historical-patriotic are singled out, for they contain high literary and cognitive value. The subject of historical lamentations is reality, the tragic events of the people's lot. Here, authentic facts are presented through the author's distinct artistic treatment, which above all finds expression in profound patriotism, in the ideals of liberation and salvation of the homeland. In historical lamentation, the literary quality of the tragedy is underlined above all. The concern for the future of the people and the land, the dissatisfaction and discomfort vis-à-vis the actual situation, and the aspiration to reach for the best bequeathed feelings of hope and consolation, along with the tragic. Expectation, which also connotes belief in salvation, is a characteristic of lamentation even since ancient times ("tunes of hope are intertwined in laments"). Beside the rueful, the idea of hope was also inspired by Christianity, since historical songs of lamentation were created mainly by churchmen. Differing from that of personal lamentations, where the sentient is the individual with his tragic tunes, in historical-patriotic lamentations, the causes of the general tragedy are considered to be the public's collective sins, as reprisal for which appears the enemy, with his barbaric force and destructive armies. And, finally, in the name of the people, the author of historical lamentation addresses his *mea culpa* to God, supplicating for protection and consolation (Hovhannes Mshetsi, Khachatur Kecharetsi, and others). The best example of this literary form is Shnorhali's *Lament for Edessa*, where, by the use of literary personification, the city of Edessa takes on the form of a mother who has lost a son; a treatment that has emotional and psychological dimension. She is a living, breathing person who has seen bright and happy days, who has had children and remembrances, all of which, however, have been lost, drowned in the memory of blood. Here, as a literary genre, the lamentation has both artistic imagery and emotional depth. It transmits sentiments of tragedy lived and visible, a trait many of the medieval lamentations are not endowed with. The ability to fuse the lyrical and historical and, to artistically render documented facts, was not always an attribute of authors of historical lamentations. For that reason, many specimens of

this genre merely survive as descriptions of sad events, without attaining the status of breathing, living belles lettres.

The historical lamentation is composed of several parts. The first, the introduction, is emotional in nature; the second, the main body of the work, is the historical subject; and last, the epilogue, the conclusion derived from the second section, incites hatred toward the enemy and engenders hope toward the coming rebirth. Of course, this historical-patriotic genre has its own forms of artistic imagery and unique style and syntax, which play a significant role in producing the necessary emotional response in the reader. These lamentations were originally in prose (as in Khorenatsi) but subsequently, beginning in the twelfth century, in verse, because with verse it is easier to express delicate and impressive sentiments, considered the main characteristics of lamentation. This aspect of verse was so highly rated, that many works of prose, such as Jeremiah's *Lamentations*, David's *Psalms*, Solomon's *Song of Songs*, the story of *Barlaam and Joasaph*, *vitae* and martyrologies, and various sections of the Gospel were rendered in rhyme by many medieval writers.

After Shnorhali many followed the artistic conceptualization of *Lament for Edessa*. The personification of cities, countries, the church, and later, rivers, birds, the moon, and other objects, and the author's expression, through those objects, of his own thoughts and feelings, became a standard literary norm and was often utilized. The poem *Lament for Jerusalem*, written by twelfth-century poet Grigor Tgha in 1189, employed such literary devices.²

GRIGOR IV TGHA (ca. 1133-1193) was Catholicos of Cilicia from 1173 to his death and was the son of Nerses Shnorhali's older brother. He received his education in Hromkla and was the author of poems, reflective-admonitive verses, and theological works. His poem, *Lament for Jerusalem*, refers to events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187 as well as the brave self-defense of Cilician Armenians against the same Saladin and the Turkmens. The poem, composed of 4,010 lines, is written in *grabar*; and, in it Grigor Tgha accuses all Christian nations for not having formed a united front against the Muslim conquerors and for not coming to the aid of Jerusalem to save it. The image of Jerusalem is reminiscent of the description of Edessa in Shnorhali's poem.

Where are the ladies of the royal house,
 Or the women of opulence?
 Where are their servants and maids
 Or the ladies-in-waiting?
 Where are the banquets, the dancing of feet,
 Or the leaping and clapping of hands?
 Where are the cup-bearers worthy of praise,
 They who would take vessels of glass,
 And would rise and bring the trivet
 On the tips of trembling fingers?
 Where those who waited on the tables,
 They who would serve delicacies,
 Who were like angels,
 At a heavenly table ... ³

Where is the throne of the Patriarch,
 Or the priests on the holy altar?
 Where are the deacons in service,
 Or the ministers of the mass?
 Where the scent of incense unto you,
 Invisible and visible?
 Or the congregations
 On the dominical feast days?
 Where, then, the thrones of the king
 Within you, city of Vagharshapat?
 Or the lords of the king.... ⁴

Grigor Tgha praises Armenian King Levon II, an invincible commander who directed the defense of the country; Grigor Tgha compares him to Alexander the Macedonian and great Armenians such as Haik, Trdat, Artashes, and Tigran. Writing under the immediate impressions of events, the author has been able to endow the poem with a unique spirit—especially in regards to the Armenian commanders and the defense of the country—and evoke certain emotions (hate, hope, vengeance). In philology, *Lament for Jerusalem* is considered to be patterned after Shnorhali's *Lament for Edessa* and, from the perspective of poetic art, has not been highly rated.

The work is valuable, however, in its historical content, providing a visualization of the Middle East in the twelfth century, the political situation of Cilician Armenia, and the customs in Palestine. It is written in monsyllabic rhymes, repeating the word "Jerusalem" (lines 1344-1676 of the poem). The poet has emulated the style and formulas of popular songs, the *hairens* of troubadours, and wedding songs of praise. Innovations in metrication are noticeable. Coming after Shnorhali, Grigor Tgha further developed the art of rhyming, making use of various rhymes.

One of the best examples of historical lamentations of the thirteenth century is *STEPANOS ORBELIAN's Voghb i dimats Katoghikein* (Lament On Behalf of the Cathedral), written in 1300 at the behest of Khachatur Kecharetsi.⁵ The ominous events taking place in Armenia and Cilicia in the thirteenth century form the historical foundation for Stepanos's lamentation. The homeland was trampled on as a result of Mongol invasions and groaning under the burden of onerous taxes, while Cilicia was constantly subject to incursions and massacres by the Mamluks of Egypt. Hromkla, in Cilicia, the seat of the Armenian Catholicosate for 140 years, was destroyed in 1292. The Catholicos of Armenians, along with his bishops, was taken to Egypt, where he died in prison. The newly-elected Catholicos, Grigor Anavarzetsi, transferred the seat of the Catholicosate to Sis in 1293 and attached hopes for saving the country on the Pope of Rome, who in turn attempted to Latinize—that is, Catholicize—the Armenian Church. As a result, discontent and agitation developed among the clergy. The churches in the east were against the position adopted by the Armenian Church in Cilicia. Deeply disturbed by this situation, Orbelian, in his lamentation, proposes that Armenians should concentrate on their homeland and transfer the Catholicosate from the west to the east, to Vagharshapat, the ancient seat of the Catholicoi. The author expresses his thoughts and sentiments through personification, in the name of the personified Cathedral. All of Armenia laments with the words of that most ancient monument, having lost its political independence and subjugated to foreign rule. The "Queen"—that is, the foresaken cathedral of ancient Vagharshapat—calls upon her far off children to return to the motherland and make it prosper. The descriptions illustrate the condition of the cathedral during that time—an abandoned, desolate monastery, in a similarly deserted Vagharshapat. The lament of the

“widowed Queen” is heard in the ruins regarding the former leaders of Armenia, their glory, decline, destructions, and the desolation of the princely houses. She calls upon her daughter-churches, monasteries, and Armenian-populated towns to come together and be re-adorned by ancient grandeur. *Lament On Behalf of the Cathedral* is a poem both with tragic contents and a political message to return to the land and its memories, to its history and people.

Once I was as the heavens,
 Now I am level with the gutter;
 Once I was light born of the sun,
 Now darkness unimaginable...
 Once a bride in the nuptial chamber,
 Embraced to the bosom of the groom,
 Now I am a concubine,
 Worthless as spilled water.⁶

Orbelian does not place hopes on the assistance of Western nations; rather, he suggests to grieve no more and to grow attached to the true homeland, its church, and remembrance. With its honest and sensitive patriotic spirit, such an outlook and position regarding national tragedy was new and in the future became one of the characteristic concepts of Armenian national songs, adopted by many. The lamentation of Orbelian, thanks to its modern and ardent nature, spread quickly and made a strong impact in its time. The lamentation is written with passion, but in style and content is patterned after Shnorhali's *Lament for Edessa*, the crowning work of this genre in medieval literature.

KHATCHATUR KECHARETSI's (c. 1260-c. 1331) literary activity falls in the same historical time period. Kecharetsi, who is considered to be of the Proshian princely family, was the abbot of Kecharis, or Kecharuik, Monastery.⁷ He has not left a large literary legacy—spiritual and love poems, admonitives, the extensive poem *Vogh b vash averman tans arevelian* (Lament On the Destruction of the Eastern Lands), the apocryphal tale *Vash galstian moguts* (On the Advent of the Magi), and the editing of the text of the Armenian translation of Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Life of Alexander*. His *Lament On the Destruction of the Eastern Lands* (ninety lines) is written with genuine sentiments of patriotism; it reflects the onerous events taking

place in Armenia in the 1290s, when Mongol rule was becoming unbearable under Ghazan Khan, while the entire country was being enslaved and ravished. Kecharetsi laments for the "Eastern Lands," that is, the helpless state of the ruined Armenia, the division of the Armenian Church, and the loss of famous Armenian princes who would have had the strength and ability to deal with the Mongols.

Our enviable princes died
Along with their young sons;
The mourning of Israel overcame us,
The great weeping and wailing of Rachel.
Sadun, beloved of the great Apaghan,
Praised as exquisite everywhere,
Open your eyes, as in Damascus,
See our lands quaking,
Our churches in great danger,
And our priests in Tartarus;
Khutlu-bugha in bloodied clothing,
His matchless figure in the dirt.
I dare not remember the Georgian king,
The Atlas-like face of Demeter,
Sweat from which still flows,
Gasping yet still alive.
Lord Prosh, now pitiable,
Who once turned metal gates to dust
And was the right hand of New Zion....⁸

In this lamentation, written with lyrical outpouring and a wounded spirit, Kecharetsi, remembering heroes of the past, the famous Armenian prince Sadun, his son Khutlu-bugha, and in-law Lord Prosh, inspires patriotic feelings and engenders nationalistic motivations in his contemporaries. These same intentions drove Kecharetsi to ask Orbelian to write his lamentation.

The subjects of Kecharetsi's poetry are, in general, the same medieval themes: terrible judgment, the transience of life, man's aspiration for perfection, awareness of sin, or moralization. Besides these, Kecharetsi has written a poem on the rose and nightingale (104

lines) and thus, along with Kostandin Yerznkatsi, is one of the first in medieval Armenian literature to treat this Eastern romance.

Kecharetsi has a popular idiom and style and for that reason is intimate with norms of composition in the art of folk poetry.

My world was like the sea,
It overwhelmed me in its advance;
My life was like the waves,
It enveloped me like a prison.

Love was like the depths,
It pulled me down, powerless;
My days were like the flower,
That faded like a dream....⁹

Kecharetsi follows the meter of *hairens*, writing in iamb-anapest (7-8) lines. His language is Middle Armenian, relatively unaltered and clear; although, it is not completely free of dialectic idioms.

Kecharetsi's name is also tied to the tale *Romance of Alexander the Macedonian*, one of the most widespread works in medieval literature.

In the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, tales called *zbosutsik* (diverting) or *zvarchakan* (amusing), similar to the European novels of chivalry, were in circulation in Armenia. One of these, the fictional story of the life of Alexander the Great, was written in Greek in the second or third century. It was translated into Armenian in the fifth century, and many copies are extant.¹⁰ Callisthenes was considered the author of the tale, although it was also attributed to Aesop, Ptolemy, and Aristotle. The Alexander Romance was widespread throughout Europe and the East, where for centuries they admired the Macedonian's figure, believed in the many fabulous tales spun around him, and produced numerous literary works about Alexander (until the fifteenth century). This also served as the basis for the production of such literary monuments as: the Persian poets Firdawsi's *Shahnamah* (tenth century), Nizami Ganjaev's *Iskandarnamah* (thirteenth century), the Indian-Persian poet Amir Khusraw's poem (fourteenth century), and Ali Shir Navasi's *Val Iskender* (fifteenth century).

Kecharetsi copied Pseudo-Callisthenes,¹¹ wrote an introduction, and noted parallels between the fate of Alexander and the life of Christ. It is supposed that Kecharetsi's interest in Alexander was not literary but motivated by the political and social events of the time.

For Kecharetsi, the great Greek's wisdom, bravery, and patriotism, as a leader and defender of his homeland, was a model. He was a figure whose heroic stature Armenians sorely needed under the Tatar yoke. This then was Kecharetsi's inspiration for undertaking the preparation of the text of the Armenian translation of the *Alexander Romance* in its eighteen variants and with an introduction. He also wrote poems about various of Alexander's exploits, which are called *kafas*.¹²

It is notable that Kecharetsi's laments and *kafas* of moral, philosophic nature are ingeniously interwoven into the story, emphasizing the medieval idea of the vanity of the world and life.

This life is like a dream,
When awake, it is in vain;
In sleep one thinks oneself a prince,
On awaking, poor and foolish;
When hungry, one sees bread,
If lofty, one is lacking and worthless.
And so it was with Alexander,
Who entered the narrow grave.¹³

At the end of the *Alexander Romance*, Kecharetsi wrote four pieces in prosopopoeia, which are laments said by Alexander, his mother, his wife, and his nobles. They are written in Classical Armenian, in high style, and with rhetorical flair.

Kafas relating to the *Alexander Romance* were also written by Armenian medieval writers Zakaria Gnunetsi, Hovasap Sebastatsi, Grigoris Aghtamartsi in the sixteenth century. The latter revised, embellished, and even illustrated several copies of the *Alexander Romance*. Aghtamartsi also edited the "Story of the Copper City" which had already been translated in the thirteenth century (by Arakel Shirakvanetsi) or even earlier. There is evidence in colophons which suggest that Aghtamartsi also worked on the forty-three *kafas* in the "Story of the Copper City."¹⁴

The high churchman, poet, philosopher, grammarian, and educator *ARAKEL SIUNETSI* (c. 1350-c. 1425) also left a valuable literary legacy. He received his education at the University of Tatev as the student of Hovhannes Vorotnetsi and Grigor Tatevatsi, his mother's brother. Arakel Siunetsi was the archbishop of Siunik and taught for many years at the University of Tatev. Among his surviving works are poems, as well as *Meknutium Kerakanin* (Commentary on the Grammarian) and *Lutzmunk haghags sahmanatsn Davti Anhaght pilisopayi* (Analysis of the Philosopher Davit Anhaght's Categories).¹⁵ Siunetsi occupies a special place in Armenian literature for his lyric and didactic verse and epics. In *Drakhtagirk* (Book of Paradise) and *Adamgirk* (Adam Book) Siunetsi's main concern is the fate and existence of man, the most important issues of the age relating to man's life and his perfectability.

Book of Paradise is interesting in its artistic conception. It is a description of the after-life, both heaven and hell, where mortals are compensated according to their deeds—joy and glory for the sinless, eternal torment for the sinful. The poem's main protagonist is the author himself who, like Virgil in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, guides the reader through life beyond the grave, where dead souls mired in sin give allegorical advice to the living, urging them to live kindly and honestly so as to be worthy of eternal kingdom.

Adam Book is a longer work (written in 1403, published 1799), which has survived in several variants. It is composed of 1740 lines and expresses the idea of paradise lost, as in Milton's famous opus, but written more than 250 years earlier. The material is drawn from the Bible and recounts the story of Adam and Eve's fateful sin. The author has embellished the Biblical account of the tragedy of the loss of paradise with folk motifs, episodes, and apocryphal writings.

The poem's message is the same moralistic call, the command to live virtuously, which Siunetsi executes with great literary ingenuity.

The description of paradise engulfed in the radiance of bliss and happiness is a perfect picture, in whose luxuriance the first man rejoices.

The glory of paradise was beyond words,
 Splendid and enchanting;
 The flowers sparkled,
 Like the sun and moon.

Adam's countenance blossomed with glory,
Radiant like light;
Rays of light flowed hence,
Sparking like a fire.

His countenance blossomed with variety,
Like the light of the sun;
He emitted fragrance of immortality,
In bliss he rejoiced by himself.

Adam was a new-born flower,
A bud of spring light;
Blossoming gloriously in paradise,
In his heart there was clapping joy.

How like a mirror he glowed;
God always appeared to him;
And the rays of light flowed forth,
And sparkled in his person.¹⁶

But evil foils Adam's happiness in paradise; Eve has been tricked by Satan into eating the forbidden fruit. She weeps bitterly and tries to persuade Adam to commit the same fateful mistake, on account of which they are driven from Paradise. Reliving their former bliss in their minds, they feel remorse for what they had done and are comforted by the hope of finding the eternal kingdom again.

Arakel Siunetsi presents the characters' action and psyches through a blend of epic and lyric elements, establishing the Gospel truth that human beings have free will, hence they alone are responsible for their deeds.

Adam Book is a unique work with definite artistic merit. The numerous commentaries on Adam and Eve's sin detract, however, from that value, vitiating the poem's unity and structural integrity.

Beside epic poems, Siunetsi also wrote verse of a religious-moral nature in light secular meter with vivid descriptions, rich in adjectives and similes. One of those poems, "Behold I Desire You

Dear," has been translated into Russian under the title "Prayer" and interpreted as a secular love song and the author as a secular poet.¹⁷

Arising I seek you with love,
With eyes wet as the sea;
Rejoiced in you with wine,
Gaze fixed upon your breasts ...

Or:

Like fire I am aflame with love,
I am faint from desiring you ...
Release me to the house of wine,
Sing me songs of love....¹⁸

And, not only this. Some critics, noting the light style of his odes, their descriptive richness, especially when depicting the Mother of God ("Praise of the Mother of God"), have called Siunetsi a troubadour of secular love and spirit, finding similarities between *hairens* and his lyric poetry. In my opinion, the laic form of his odes does not arise from secular sentiments. He is a religious man of deep convictions attempting to refresh and renew the old, oppressive ecclesiastical style and to make religious ideas more accessible. Because his aim was not to sing praises of love or beauty but to revitalize dead or dying piety and spiritual sentiment, palpably absent in the fifteenth century. The Armenian Church and creed were sacred to him.

With the aim of strengthening the Armenian Church and its faith, Siunetsi dedicated poems to St. Gregory the Illuminator and to Ejmiatzin. The concepts of church and homeland are one for him and convey to Siunetsi's religious fervor a patriotic spirit. In the poem "Song to Ejmiatzin," the seat of the Only-begotten is described in its past glory, when it was "abode for kings" and "assembly of patriarchs."

Behold, rejoice Vagharshapat,
Heavenly carved capital,
Sturdy walls, high towers,
Remembered colorful by the eye.

Ejmiatzin, name revered,
Worshiped by all,
Blessed by angels.
Glorified by mortals,
Ejmiatzin, gathering place
Of our wandering nation,
Scattered here and there,
For our disorderliness.

Ejmiatzin, you collector
Of our Armenian nation of Torgom,
An abode for kings,
And assembly of patriarchs.

While early medieval historians and writers considered sin to be the cause of the Armenian people's misfortunes, Siunetsi attributed the dispersion of Armenians and the destruction of their country to "our disorderliness," that is, the absence of a unified national spirit from which all evil sprung. Siunetsi considered the invigoration of religious-ecclesiastical sentiment of the people important; because, in the final analysis, he considered the Church the bulwark of a stateless people, the sustenance and consolation to which Armenians could cling in their desolation. For that reason, this prolific writer sings of great Armenians— St. Gregory the Illuminator, Trdat the Great (in whose time Armenia became Christian), and Grigor Narekatsi. He considered the latter to be the second illuminator of the nation, whose work shone "among the works of others" like the sun "among the stars."

Siunetsi also wrote odes and chants about eternal life and the last judgment, to one extent or another touched upon or even repeated in *Adam Book* and *Book of Paradise*. His didactic odes gave moral advice to priests and condemned their way of life ("Advice to the Priest's Wife and Priest," "Again On Celibate Priests"). In certain odes, he divides people into good and bad groups and describes their behavior and the customs of the time ("Odes On the Charactersitics of Various Human Behavior"). He records 370 evils (flattery, bribe-taking, deceit, faithlessness, etc.) which he considered to be the work of demons.

Even as literature with religious content, Siunetsi's poems are easy to read. They have light rhythm and fresh metric forms. He

composed in various meters, from multi-syllabic anapests to the short meters of *hairens*. The influence of *gusan* songs, exaggerations, new images, and rich vocabulary are evident in his legacy. Siunetsi used acrostics extensively, tying together nouns and even sentences.

ARAKEL BAGHISHETSI (c. 1380-1454), born in the village of Por, city of Baghesh, in Vaspurakan (today the vilayet of Bitlis, Turkey), also left a rich and valuable literary legacy.¹⁹

Arakel Baghishetsi held the rank of *vardapet* and was the prior of an order, having been the disciple of one of the great teachers of his time, Grigor Khlatetsi (1349-1425) also known as Tzerents. Baghishetsi wrote about him in his "Elegy on the Death by Martyrdom of Tzerents Grigor Vardapet Khlatetsi," and "History of Our Brave and World-Illumining Vardapet Grigor Khlatetsi Tzerents."²⁰

To date seven eulogies of Baghishetsi are extant, wherein he expresses patriotic sentiments along with religious ideas. His works of this genre are noteworthy for their ornate rhetorical style, the best being the eulogy to Grigor Khlatetsi. The martyrologies by Baghishetsi are dedicated to Vardan Baghishetsi, Stepanos vardapet, Petros Kahana, Grigor Khlatetsi, and Amirza Sparkerttsi. These works of his remain within traditional bounds of the genre and are of interest for their record of fifteenth century events, details of religious persecutions, the ideas of the individual of the time, and his religious devotion.

Notable among Arakel Baghishetsi's oeuvre is the allegorical poem "Ode of the Nightingale and Rose," written in the form of a dialogue and possible to be interpreted in both religious and secular terms. It is a pretty canvas of an intimate confession between the pair, to which is added a stern religious epilogue.

Baghishetsi has also earned a place in literature for his *Tagh Hovasapu* (Ode of Joasaph) and *Voghb mairakaghakin Stempolu* (Lament For the Capital Constantinople). In 1434 he transformed the hagiographic tale of Barlaam and Joasaph, famous in international literature, into verse.²¹ It is the traditional biography of Buddha, translated into Armenian in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, during the period of literary secularization. Joasaph's story, translated from Greek into *grabar*, was inaccessible to the masses. Baghishetsi first transformed the story into verse, then changed the Classical Armenian into Middle Armenian.

With Christian concerns but also with a contemporary approach, Baghishetsi creatively developed the tale of Joasaph on the basis of the extensive and abridged variants of the story. He eliminated the dogmatic passages which interrupted the flow of the story (the prophecies, sermons on resurrection and final judgment, numerous fables, and homilies) and changed the course of events and the heroes' characters, while preserving the basic plot. In converting the poem's narrative style from prose, Baghishetsi endowed the characters and their behavior with psychological depth (Abener's letter to his son, the argument between father and son, Abener's love of life). The three main characters are King Abener, Joasaph's father, a moving figure sacrificing himself for his son; Barlaam, the ideologist of Christianity with a hermit's realistic traits; and, Joasaph, a complex and rich character whose individuality is revealed gradually from the splendid palace to the desert.

Baghishetsi even introduces certain national traits. For example, he adds a lament for the death of Joasaph, absent in the prose version. Here the author laments for India upon losing King Joasaph; because, in the Armenian mentality, without a strong leader the country cannot progress.

Baghishetsi has blended into the general account of the poem seven fables, whose origin is folkloric and which elevate the poem's artistic import. Baghishetsi wrote in mixed Classical Armenian, using dialogues, dialectal forms, and light style, which convey vitality to his work. His innovations in style, language, and genre make his opus timely and stirring with Christian content.

The quatrains of the poem all end in the same rhyme and subtly maintain the poetic tension and meter, making it sonorous and enticing. Medieval manuscripts record that the poem was incanted and various passages were sung.

Baghishetsi also wrote *Patmutiun srbuin Grigori Lusavorchin* (Story of St. Gregory the Illuminator) and *Nerboghian taghachapakan i vera varuts Metzin Nersesi* (Metrical Panegyric On the Life of Nerses the Great) in verse, wherein he glorifies the Armenian Church and its fathers.

The historical source for the first was Agatangeghos's *History of the Armenians* and for the second, *History of the Armenian Patriarch St. Nerses Partev* by Mesrop Yerets Vayotsdzoretsi (tenth century).²²

Mesrop, in turn, drew upon Pavstos Buzand's *History of the Armenians* and the apocryphal *Dashants tught* (Letter of Accord) which is supposed to have been a mutual assistance pact between King Trdat and Byzantine Emperor Constantine.²³ Both works, though artistically weak and uninspired, are relevant in that they express the expectations of liberation among Armenians of Baghishetsi's time, nourished by various prophetic writings.

According to the tale in *Letter of Accord*, in the fifteenth century those prospects of liberation came from the West. The friendly relations between the Pope and Armenians, begun during the Crusader era in the twelfth century, pursued religious and political ends. Those relations, reflected in the forged treaty called *Letter of Accord*, inspired hope in Baghishetsi's contemporaries that the liberation of Armenia would come only from Western countries. The other source of this idea was the well-known vision of Nerses Partev, included in Baghishetsi's poem dedicated to Nerses the Great. Back in the fourth century, the famous Armenian Catholicos Nerses Partev prophetically predicted the fall of the Arshakunis, the disasters suffered by the Armenian Church, the extinction of the Illuminator's heirs, and the conquest of Jerusalem. The vision also revealed that Armenians were going to be made subject to the Greeks, after which Armenia, along with Byzantium, would be subjected to the destructions of "archers," that is, the Seljuks. These misfortunes would be brought to an end by the Franks (Romans), who would liberate Jerusalem and Armenia, after which there would be peace and the Armenian people would once again flourish and prevail. The coming of the Anti-Christ would follow, and after that, the Final Judgment. This constellation of predictions, thought to have been authored by Nerses the Great, was, in reality, a compilation by church fathers of events transacted in later centuries. At the time of the destruction of Constantinople and the advance of the Muslims, these prophecies brightened people's desperate souls and inspired hope in them.

Among Armenians, the fall of Constantinople in 1453 was considered a great tragedy, about which Abraham Ankiuratsi wrote *Voghb i vera arman Kostandinupolso* (Lament on the Capture of Constantinople); Arakel Baghishetsi, *Voghb mairakaghakin Stempolu*; and Yereemia Keomiurchian, *Hankumn Biuzandioni* (The Fall of Byzantium).²⁴ This was an event which sent shock waves through the

Christian world, especially the Armenian clergy and intellectuals; since, with the fall of Constantinople, any political expectations of assistance from the West against the Muslim world were dashed as well. This is the reason that Armenians of Byzantium fought bravely alongside the Greeks in 1453 to defend the city against the forces of Mahomed II.²⁵

Arakel Baghishetsi's *Lament For the Capital Constantinople* was written in 1453 while the memories of the fall and the author's feelings were fresh. He laments the destruction of the Capital both for himself and for the sake of mankind; a city, which had been the cradle of civilization for so many centuries, the "glory of land and sea" bearing the blessings of the "theologue holy patriarchs," had now the curse. He reminisces about the kings and patriarches that had participated in the city's greatness and fame in expressive and engaging images—"Source of life," "Garden of Eden," "City of Saints," "Treasure chest of the Lord's treasure," "Pearl, message of the Lord," "Great and renowned," etc.—and mourned the universal loss and dejection of the Christian world.

Now, all nations and races,
Mourn you, city of Constantinople,
For of all creation,
You are the glory and honor, Constantinople.

You were God's abode
And inn, city of Constantinople,
Today you have become home
Of the pagans, city of Constantinople.

Heaven and earth are together
Wailing for you, Constantinople,
Protected by the heavenly host
And the earthly, city of Constantinople.

The angels from heaven praised you,
Unequalled city, Constantinople,
Defended by the heavenly host,
Resplendid city, Constantinople.

Today for evildoers you have become
 A resting place, Constantinople,
 And all your glory and honor
 Has passed away, city of Constantinople.²⁶

Lament For the Capital Constantinople is an elegiac poem composed of three parts and a colophon. Each line of the poem ends with "Constantinople," repeated in fifty-two lines comprising the first part of the *Lament*.

The second part, written with the *in* rhyme, consists of thirty lines ending in the word "Byzantium." In this segment, glorification of the past and description of the disastrous events continue, nurturing the distant hope of future salvation and renewal.

The poem is composed of eighty quatrains (320 lines): the first forty-one lines being the lament for "Constantinople" and "Byzantium" while the following thirty-nine quatrains are about the prospects and predictions of recapturing Constantinople and Jerusalem by the Franks.

Let everywhere in general
 Brave people be moved,
 And united together
 Burn with divine love.

May they come over land and sea
 Like stars beyond number,
 Exhorting everyone
 To the God-sent battle.

First take the city of Constantinople,
 With the omnipotent will of the savior,
 Then charge forward,
 And spread all over the world.

Rise upon the land of the East,
 And destroy everybody,
 Like a lion roaring,
 Attack the lawless.

Take the city of Jerusalem,
The place of evil against the Lord,
And with gold decorate,
The doors of the tomb of Resurrection.²⁷

May Frank forces be innumerable,
Like the sand on the seashore,
So no one can defeat them,
The brave Frank nation.

Like lightning from a pipe,
Shoot the infidels,
And drive out the Turkish nation,
For it is opposed to the holy cross.

Take back the entire Roman world,
And reach Egypt,
Tear down the abode of demons,
The shrine of the iniquitous.²⁸

The liberation of Constantinople, according to Baghishetsi, was going to save the entire Christian world, among them also the Christian East and Armenia. Baghishetsi shared the political reliance of the Western oriented or latinophiles in the question of Byzantium's salvation, recognizing that Constantinople's as well as Armenia's only salvation from the Muslims was from the West, from the Franks (Romans). He nurtured the dream of a crusade and in his poem describes a vision: The forces of King Trdat were to lead the Roman armies which were to liberate Armenia and reestablish Arshakuni rule and reinstitute the Seat of the Illuminator in Ejmiatzin. Although Baghishetsi's lamentation has a tragic content, it also expresses optimism about the future. He is sure the nations that have created civilization and miracles of art will in the end recover their lost freedom and reestablish their rights; and, today's "victors" will turn to dust and disappear without trace from the crossroads of history. The poet's faith is infectious with its warm sentiments, patriotism, and inspired vigor and faith in his contemporaries.

ABRAHAM ANKIURATSI dedicated his poem, *Voghb i vera arman Kostandinupolso*, to the same historic event. Ankiuratsi lived in the fifteenth century (no data are known about his life) and wrote religious odes and a *Chronicle of Armenian History*, which covers the genealogy of the Armenian forebears to the events of 1358.

In *Lament on the Capture of Constantinople* Ankiuratsi, in contrast to Baghishetsi, gives a thorough account of the occupation of the city, concluding with the medieval belief that the corrupt ways and iniquities of Byzantium were the cause of God's wrath and the tragic events. On the other hand, contrary to Baghishetsi who had pro-Latin Western leanings, Ankiuratsi, as a supporter of Greek orthodoxy, blamed Rome and its agents who, instead of helping in those fateful times, were demanding that the Greeks change their creed and convert to Catholicism.²⁹ Ankiuratsi's *Lament* consists of 392 lines and is a valuable primary historical source, since it is written while the impressions of the events were still fresh.

It is composed in the eight syllable bipartite meter frequently used in lamentations, 276 lines of which (with some exceptions) end in the *in* rhyme, the remainder ending in *ial*.

Thus, Arakel Baghishetsi's and Abraham Ankiuratsi's lamentations, both written in direct response to the fall of Constantinople, express the Christians' sorrow and agitation evoked by the fall of the glorious Byzantine capital, viewed as a religious and political bulwark by Armenians surrounded by Muslim countries. Their artistic merit is not great, and they do not match the best of the genre. They are written in Classical Armenian, mixed with dialectal conversational forms and certain foreign expressions. These lamentations were copied many times in the Middle Ages and subsequently were translated into French, Russian, and English.

15. Medieval Verse (Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries)

In spite of the fact that, due to Mongol incursions, cultural opportunities had been circumscribed; and historiography, translational-educational activities, and even ecclesiastical literature had nearly ceased; lyricism flowered and thrived. Such phenomena were not accidental for Armenian literature and had their deep etymological roots in the past.

Even through forgotten times of history, Armenians were a people of spiritual bent, possessing gods and beliefs that accompanied them for centuries, providing sense and meaning to the world around. As to how far Christianity, as a new ideology, was later able to influence Armenian pagan character, and what changes to subject it to is beyond the limits of our study. In reality, the nature of Christian influence on Armenian lyricism was mystical. On the other hand, the Armenian's sentimental character bears marks of his heavy national fate, which endear modulations of poetry to outbursts of his melancholy, yet vivacious, being. These facets have found expression in *sharakans*, in Narekatsi's inspired book, and in Shnorhali's verses and elegiac epic. However, the mysticism of the Armenian soul, persisting for centuries with its gloomy quality, changed under the pressure of the spirit and ideas of secularization, yielding to cheerful emotions.

Armenian poets were able to escape from narrow-religious sensibility and exhibited expansive Christian feelings, free poetic thinking, visible especially after the tenth century in Narekatsi's and Shnorhali's works. Whereas, in spiritual songs, *sharakans*, religious mentality remained fixed, and those hymns became material for church ritual. Nonetheless, as with Narekatsi and Shnorhali, Armenian hymn-writers were basically formulating religious themes, either dedicated to the Bible or expressing feelings of spiritual piety. Thus it is surprising that medieval Armenian poetry did not become a vehicle of religious intolerance, though conditions existed for it. On the contrary, lyricism

inherited, in form and content, the simplicity of Armenian spiritual poetry, its inner verve, and brought forth secular emotions hidden in the people's psyche, constructing vivacious chansons of wine and merriness. The romantic nature of the Armenian finds his spiritual quests and concepts of beauty in poetry until today. He has always preferred lyricism. Probably this is one of the features manifesting his individual character, displayed in its perfect traits during the Middle Ages. Such poetic quality is not only a result of these people's aesthetic insight and linguistic resources, phraseological and analogical affluence, diversity of meter and euphony but also of its sensitive and humanitarian spirit, brilliance, and suppleness of intellect.

Ostensibly, political, cultural and commercial ties of more than a millennium and a half between Armenia and Persia could not have left no mark. In the early Middle Ages, especially during centuries of Armenian and Persian Arshakuni cooperation (first to fifth centuries A.D.), Persian influence is rather noticeable on Armenian pagan gods and beliefs.¹ In ancient times, next to Greek, Persian was a familiar and practiced language in Armenia, as testified to by Khorenatsi. Acceptance of Christianity by Armenians distanced and froze the long-standing amity. The rift deepened when Persians became Muslim. During the tenth to eleventh centuries, when political circumstances calmed in the Orient and conditions were available for cultural progress, Armenian relations with the Muslim world strengthened. In those centuries, heroes of the Iranian epic were known in Armenia and were even Armenianized, adapted to local mentality and taste. An example of this is the Iranian-Armenian romance *Rostom Zal*, considered to be an adjunct branch of *David of Sasun*.² Magistros relates certain accounts regarding Persian national figures Rostom, Spandiar, and Azhdahak in his *Epistles*; certain fragmentary information exists also in other authors' works. However, even though Armenian intellectuals were familiar with Greek, Persian, and Arabic in the tenth to eleventh centuries, writes Armeno-Iranian literary relations expert Babken Chugasdzian, "... not one mention of a Persian poet's name in literary context has been discovered in our ancient literature until the eighteenth century; not one monument of rich Persian belles lettres was translated into Armenian while neighboring Georgian literature is exceedingly rich in its ties with Persian literature, in translations and conversions from its classical poets."³ This is explained by the negative posture of the Armenian

Church towards Muslim culture. Armenian ecclesiastics rejected that literature and forbade its entrance to Christian Armenia. Yet, although appreciation of Persian literature and poetry penetrated Armenia through minstrels, nevertheless, official mentality would not accept and allow it into pages of medieval scripts.

Still, Armenian lyricism bears elements of poetic style and certain literary forms of oriental peoples, peculiar to Arabic and Persian. That was the general imprint of eastern lyricism, which Armenian could not avoid. Yet, amid those interrelationships the latter was more unique and far from strict oriental formalism. Armenia was situated at the intersection of West and East, where European and Asian cultures, Christian and pagan conceptions collided, often blended with each other, producing a mixture unlike the European or Asian. Coexistence of eastern and western elements is noticeable in Armenian music, as well as in art and literature. Warmth and charm of the East is present in Armenian medieval chansons, yet simultaneously, so is western discreet finesse and cultivated intellect. In contrast to oriental poetry, Armenian verse presents a psyche unlike Eastern spirit; it is gentler, delicate, and does not possess that unrestrained colorfulness and opulent accumulation of images that formed an essential part of poetry of the Orient. Even so, literary forms and conceptions, being very transmittable, are in some measure similar in the arts of various peoples. So Persian, Arab, and Armenian romances of nearly the same period are interrelated through their poetic features and content.

Armenian lyricism is unique in its secular mood with motifs of nature, love, rose and nightingale, homeland and expatriation. In essence it is spiritual and worldly. Armenian versifiers were religious and educated men, for whom discovery of the secular was as sweet as the burden of the spiritual was strong. So they suffered not only in chaste conduct of the pious and from terrible visions of hell but also experienced and enjoyed life with its warmth and allures, even if from afar and not intimately. Thrill of the worldly did not help sufficiently to forget that life was transitory, since most of them were convinced Christians not carried away by the heroic theory of Christianity but rather by its real philosophy, contrasting with, and creating tragic situations for, their secular souls. This produced mounting spiritual agitation, later transmitted to Armenian literature of modern times.

As centuries following eras of secularization, the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries are characterized in literature by those same qualities, except felt deeper. Here, too, man is a poetic protagonist with his worldly aspirations and rationality, individual and social experiences, concerns and dreams. This, already, was a new poetic dimension, in vivid common language and imagination, bound to the psyche of aforementioned centuries. While the new spirit was slowly becoming evident within that psyche, the human creature was being displayed in his quotidian traits. He not only prayed but also laughed and cried, played and fought, ate, hated, etc. Having to deal with this new man, the imaginative vision of poets broadened to the extent they could see him deeper. In its totality, Armenian medieval poesy is lively, has hidden charms, is cheerful, colorful—replete with ascents and descents. Yet, though the capacity to see deep and penetrate is rare, distinct facets and details of life are often well demonstrated and circumstances are displayed in action.

Similar to the Arabic and Persian, Armenian verse has various forms and a metric character. Several poetic genres are employed here: eulogies, elegies, songs of nature, love, wisdom, faith, and admonition, quatrains, and epics. Each genre expresses particular emotions and live conditions where the material selected has distinctive stylistic texture, acting as a link between form and content. Everything is written as the genre demands, not according to the poet's individual conception. And individualization of verse is basically evident not throughout the opus but in separate details that slipped into the poem. So while new ideas spreading in medieval Armenia infiltrated Armenian poesy rather easily, renovation in style made its way laboriously.

The better Armenian medieval poets introduced fresh and colorful subjects, though in content and form these were extremely conditional. Songs on spring and love, admiration for woman, praise and enjoyment of banquetry were elements derived from old secular genres. Armenian medieval poets are famous for their directness and incognizance. They are not aware of anachronism, regarding historical differences of time and place. Those chansons do not have the stamp of locality or national psyche. Even in their poems about nature, description of distinctive locale and landscape specific to the Armenian countryside is absent. This is characteristic of Armenian verse in the twelfth to seventeenth centuries and stretches to the eighteenth century,

only after which does national ornamentation occupy a firm place in Armenian poetry (Petros Ghapantsi, Ghevond Alishan, Rapayel Patkanian, Mkrtich Peshiktashlian, and others).

The manner in which the attitude toward nature is expressed in lyricism is attractive and noticeable as a colorful image, possessing a living spirit. This carries the same hues and durable charms characterizing medieval Armenian miniature painting.

Medieval Armenian romance appears alongside emotional conceptions and descriptions of nature. Worldly love, now the subject of lyricism, is sometimes expressed allegorically while at other times is completely free of it. The romance of rose and nightingale, a popular motif in Armenian literature in the tenth to eighteenth centuries as well as among oriental and even occidental peoples, was a type of allegory of love which carried sparkling and colorful images of emotion and an eastern appreciation of understanding love.

Having a Christian outlook, Armenian versifiers attempt in every way to rationalize and justify the human right to love. They try to reconcile their God-fearing existence and moral precepts with worldly love and pleasures. This attitude toward human love and body was a remarkable achievement in Armenian reality, brought about by secularization.

Woman, endowed with godly beauty, appears as an artistic image to describe which all colors of the oriental-conventional palette are employed. For the medieval songster, woman is a luminous figure, a matchless beauty; to portray whose warmth and delicacy he uses pretty arrangements of adjectives and analogies and numerous lyrical idioms. Woman is compared to fruit, flower, tree, fragrant plants, honey, fire, and many other phenomena and objects. In certain instances, she has a character, expressed in myriad situations. She is tender, immaculate, and at times fiery and lucid, whom one loves or reproaches. In this sense, woman has been adulated for outer or inner qualities she possessed but not looked upon as a source of pleasure.

All moods of love are expressed in medieval Armenian lyricism. With all of its nuances, it springs from the human heart, which is honest and direct in its feelings of expectancy and longing, dolefulness and separation. The all-embracing magnitude of love is displayed in impressive poetic images which, together with gushing sentimentality, convey such a colorfulness that the woman-being becomes totally

visible in her radiant beauty. So it is surprising that each Armenian versifier distinctly discerned sentiments of love and beauty, entirely different from one another and springing from the individual nature of each.

The exposition of picturesque nature and emotions was helped by accessible and easily comprehensible language, Middle Armenian, with which medieval songsters composed and which, as a written language, was based on linguistic, conventional forms of the past, namely classical *grabar*. In medieval Armenian scriptures it was, little by little, occupying equivalent space alongside the older literary language. These influenced each other respectively, underwent qualitative changes; but, as carrier of the inner development logic of history, Middle Armenian was gaining primacy.⁴ On the other hand, folk mentality introduced a simple lyrical attitude and clarity in forms of description.

In nearly all arenas of intellectual life during the Middle Ages, the dominant outlook was religious. Yet, although the progress of the times, the frenzied displacements of the urban environment, as well as the achievements of natural philosophy were altering medieval thought toward life and nature, still, it remained divided between natural needs and religious temperament. On one side it was developing secular sentiments of nature and love, pagan vivaciousness, and on the other, religious and moralistic themes. So this same duality of soul and body forced poets to create religious and secular songs, which at times cling to blessed rewards of visible and tangible reality, and at times revolt and tremble at the prospect of death and hell.

In patriotic elegies and parables of the tenth to twelfth centuries, as well as reflective and admonitive poetry developing progressively, sentiments and thoughts are palpable, springing more from individual and popular psyche than devotion and piety toward faith and church, as had existed until then. The modern ethos, free of religious constriction, studied and elevated human individuality, the most important feature of secularization. Beginning with Frik's (thirteenth century) song of protest to Naghash Hovnatan's (seventeenth century) pagan oeuvre, the subject of Armenian poetry is man, reflected with manifold layers of his soul, the individual with his needs and wants, love and worldly delight.

"We see," writes Abeghian, "that the individual gains his value by diverging from generality, and displays himself, caring for his

memory; *personal poetry* is born, for which the poet's own feelings, love and hatred, fate and misfortune, become subjects. Body is given its right, so with it begins the *nature and love* chanson, written by an ecclesiastic, in the imagery of rose and nightingale or without it; yet, nature is not for allegory anymore, but for its own sake. And lastly, plaintively emerges the morbid *song of death* and vanity of world (altogether different from Narekatsi's dirge of death) as a consolation for unjust and unequal social and national circumstance; or as an end to pain-ridden empty individual life—a song, which the contemporary literature of Provence does not possess and which appears in French literature only in the second half of the fifteenth century.”⁵

Following Narekatsi's elegiac lyricism, parallel to the idea of futility blossomed praise of life and world, love and pleasure, reflections of the individual self, philosophical meditations, patriotism, dissatisfaction with economic and political conditions, criticism of injustice, satire and defiance, aspirations for free and unshackled existence; ideas and sentiments, through which Armenian literature was getting rid of medieval outlook and ethos. This lyricism is primarily characterized by its secular spirit, adding new hues and aromas to Armenian poesy.

With its ideas, artistic merit and quality, and erudite sentimentality, medieval lyricism was one of the brightest periods of Armenian verse, acting as a source of lyric art and aesthetics for later poets.

In Armenian folk songs (i.e., medieval chansons) writes Russian critic Valeri Bryusov,

... there is not the austerity of Scandinavian songs, nourished by icy waters and depressing skies. In them breathes the scorching south and splendor of the Orient. In Armenian songs there is not the sorrow and naiveté of Russian songs ... in them is felt a deep folk maturity, thrown directly from cradle into the ranks of most advanced nations. In Armenian folk songs there also is not the coarseness of German songs, repelling with its vulgar honesty. It has borrowed subtlety of thought and elegance of emotions from its oriental neighbors. Yet simultaneously, exaggerated sentimentality of eastern folk songs is unknown to Armenian songs; the Aryan blood and Hellenic school have placed a

salutary reign on unbridled oriental imagination. Despite total passion, Armenian songs are virtuous and, in their thorough ardor, restrained in expression. That is lyricism with oriental colorfulness and wisdom of the Occident, which knows grief without desperation, passion without turning obtuse, pleasure to which intemperance is alien.⁶

* * *

Medieval lyricism also developed its principles of art—forms of description, techniques, and metrics. Employment of various epithets describing objects and phenomena in their inner and outer features, analogies with characteristics derived from nature and human existence, metaphors to emphasize similarities in phenomena, exaggerations, allegories, contrasts, repetitions, rhetorical forms, etc., testify to the art of medieval verse. *Metrics*, too, forms part of this, the earliest acquaintance with which comes from works of Armenian commentators on Dionysus Thrax's grammar.⁷

Different opinions have been expressed on metrics of Armenian, including bardic poetry. Many scholars (Arsen Bagratuni, Yedvard Hiurmiuzian, Arsen Aitenian, Avetik Bahatryan, and others) regard Armenian metrics as syllabic, that is, when the rhythm of line is obtained from an equal quantity of syllables. What is here taken into consideration is the fact that, in Armenian, stress is always carried by the last syllable. In contrast to this, German scholar Johan Joachim Schröder finds it metronomic, when the essential requisite of rhythm is the conjunction of long and short syllables, by which lines of the poem would be recited in equal periods. Abeghian views the syllabic-synopative metrics as more characteristic of Armenian.⁸ It is peculiar to this metric system that the quantity of syllables and stresses be equal, where stressed and unstressed syllables together form *votker* or *andamner* (metrical feet or members). These could be bisyllabic, trisyllabic, or tetrasyllabic. The most utilized and simplest metrical feet of syllabic-synopative poetry are those formed bisyllabically and trisyllabically.

Bisyllabic feet, called *iamb* (*metzaverj*), is composed of two syllables, where the second syllable is always accented (ú), e.g., ka-rót, ka-ghák, ba-rí. *Anapest* (*verjatanj*) is trisyllabic feet, where the third

syllable is accented (uú), e.g., a-na-pát, ba-re-kárg, bu-ras-tán. Generally, the line with stresses on paired syllables (2,4,6,8) is iambic, while that with triple syllables (3,6,9,12) is anapestic. Characteristic types of versification in Armenian are poems composed in iambic, anapestic, or mixed iambic-anapestic feet, although there are other forms made of simple metrical feet.

Commonly considered as most widespread in Armenian verse in terms of structural simplicity is the poem of simple iambic feet, which has six, eight, ten, and twelve syllabic types. These in turn diverge into a few forms. Of anapestic poems, proper anapestic types (bimetric six syllabic, 3+3; trimetric nine syllabic, 3+3+3; and tetrametric twelve syllabic, 3+3+3+3) and anapestic poems with a mix of one iamb are familiar.

Medieval Armenian poets, influenced by oriental and occidental peoples, composed in various forms.⁹ Most common is the one in iambic tetrasyllable feet (4=2+2), the roots of which extend from ancient folk minstrel songs. Of medieval poets, Narekatsi (in a few of his chansons), Shnorhali, Grigor Tgha, Lambronatsi, Frik, Kostandin Yernkatsi, Arakel Baghishetsi, and others wrote in this measure. Of poems in tetrasyllable feet most employed was the eight syllable bimetric (4+4).

Du ko dzerókd / es hor porél,
Yev ko kamókd / i ners metél,
Zais um kamis / du meghadrél,
Khendir ku gán / ezkez tanél.

Դու քո ձեռնօ՛քդ, / ես հոր փորե՛լ,
Եւ քո կամօ՛քդ / ի ներս մըտե՛լ,
Զայս ո՞ւմ կամի՛ս / դու մեղադրե՛լ,
Խընդի՛ր կու գա՛ն / ըզքեզ տանե՛լ:

Or:

Yerb vor anúsh / hotn his buréts,
Zis i kheláts / shutov tapéts;
I hain pahún / sirts im yepéts,
Yerb yur tésn indz / yerevetsáv.

Նրբ որ անո՛ւշ / հոտն յիս բուրե՛ց,
 Զիս ի խելա՛ց / շուտով թափե՛ց.
 Ի յայն պահո՛ւն / սիրտս իմ եփե՛ց՝
 Նրբ իւր տե՛սն ինձ / երեւեցա՛ւ:¹¹

Main stresses of iamb bimetric eight syllable poetry fall on the fourth and eighth syllables, while rhythmic accents on the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth syllables.

Of metric forms considerably employed in medieval times is also the quadri-foot sixteen-syllable poem (2 + 4 + 4 + 4, or 3 + 4 + 4 + 4, or 4 + 4 + 4 + 4) with a stave in the middle. Here stress falls on the fourth, eighth, twelfth, and sixteenth syllables.

Tér, tsoghyá / his tsogh kenáts; // kam tzaraví, / 'v em taramátz;
 Ler pahapán / yev hovaní // yev (zis) zartó / i kno megháts.
 Vor artún / kenam patrást, // lapter varyál, / est kusanáts,
 Yev vor hamém / hunain heghúin // yev anpatrást / est
 himaráts.

Տէ՛ր, ցօղե՛ա / յիս ցօղ կենա՛ց. // կամ ծարաւի՛, / 'ւ եմ
 թառամա՛ծ.
 Լեր պահապա՛ն / եւ հովանի՛ // եւ (զիս) զարթո՛ / ի
 քնոյ մեղա՛ց:
 Որ արթո՛ւն / կենամ պատրա՛ստ, // լապտեր վառեա՛լ՝ /
 ըստ կուսանա՛ց,
 Եւ որ յամե՛մ / յունայն յեղո՛յն // եւ անպատրա՛ստ /
 ըստ յիմարա՛ց:¹²

Or:

Yev Adamá / minchev i kéz // zinch vor tzenér, / amen merér,
 Te ka i kéz / imastutiún, // zaid i mtátsd / mi hanér.

Եւ Ադամա՛յ / մինչեւ ի քե՛զ // զինչ որ ծընե՛ր՝ / ամէն
 մեռե՛ր:
 Թէ կայ ի քե՛զ / իմաստութի՛ւն, // զայդ ի մտա՛ցդ /
 մի հանե՛ր:¹³

This poetic meter has been utilized beginning with Narekatsi until songsters of the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries—Naghash Hovnatan, Petros Ghapantsi, Paghtasar Dpir, and others.

Melodic poems called *hairens* form a considerably large group in medieval poesy. Instances of the use of *hairens* are encountered even in minstrel songs of ancient times, in a few songs of Narekatsi, and among medieval Armenian songsters and bards.¹⁴

In aforementioned centuries, substantially broad was also use of the eleven syllable bifeet meter, 6 + 5, or 5 + 6, which appears in various iamb-anapestic rhythms, (2 + 2 + 2) + 5, or (4 + 2) + 5, or (2 + 4) + 5, etc. Here, stave occurs after the sixth syllable, 6 // 5.

Charkhí / deghátz / netóv // sirtes khotsér es,
Pagóv / sirtés / lapé // tants vor haván es;
Júr tur / tzarvátz / lerdís, // papák em yes kéz,
Rát / aghbiurí júv // 'v es ku nayím kez.

Չարխի' / դեղա՛ծ / նետո՛վ // սիրտըս խոցե՛ր ես,
Պագո՛վ / սիրտը՛ս / լափե՛ // թանց որ հաւա՛ն ես.
Ջո՛ւր տուր / ծարւա՛ծ / լերդի՛ս՝ // փափա՛ք եմ ես
քե՛զ,
Ռա՛տ / աղբիւրի՛ ջո՛ւր // է՛ ես կու նայի՛մ քեզ: ¹⁵

Or:

Aigí, / end kéz / asém // túr indz / pataskhán,
Endér / vóch pahetsér // zvardn ím / patvakán,
Vor é / amén / tzaghkánts // salvár / u sultán,
Gunóv / en geghetsík // hot anmahutián ...

Այգի՛, / ընդ քե՛զ / ասե՛մ // տո՛ւր ինձ / պատասխա՛ն,
Ընդէ՛ր / ոչ պահեցե՛ր // զվարդն ի՛մ / պատուակա՛ն,
Որ է՛ / ամէ՛ն / ծաղկա՛նց // սալվար / ու սուլթա՛ն,
Գունո՛վ / ըն գեղեցի՛կ // հոտ անմահուլթեա՛ն . . . : ¹⁶

Of lesser employed metric forms are: ten syllable bi-metric (Shnorhali, Tlkurantsi, Aghtamartsi); the five-syllable monometric poem (Shnorhali's "Aravot luso" and "Ashkarh amenain"); twelve-syllable

songs (3 + 4 // + 5), characteristic of folk songs; and the seven-syllable chanson.

In medieval manuscripts, poems were written in prose format or without preserving the metric feature (excepting a few). In Armenian scripture, poetic stanza occurs only in certain spiritual hymns (Mashtots, Partev, Khorenatsi), written in quatrains, couplets, tercets, sestets etc. Stanza was already formed in old times, when music and poetry were not yet separated from each other. Later, when chansons were written to be read, the need to write in metric stanzas grew; consequently, demand for scanning increased, and quatrain and couplet became dominant in the verse of the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries. By now, poetic meter and rhyme played a big role.

Several *rhymed* and *unrhymed* verse types existed. Ancient Armenian poetry, old legends, *sharakans* were unrhymed, although lexical and morphological repetition is encountered in a few of them (e.g., in the song of Vahagn: YERKner YERKin, YERKner YERKir, YERKner yev tzovn tzirani).

The use of rhyme in Armenian literature begins with Narekatsi, although there are certain indications that it existed in earlier times, in ancient Armenian songs of oral tradition and spiritual *sharakans*. Certain chapters of Narekatsi's boema possess rhyming (Dictum XXIII, XXVI, XXIX), though it and his chansons are considered works written without rhyme. To be effective, Narekatsi, as he himself admits, copied examples of monorhymic *laliats* (wailing) songs, written in the metric of *hairens*. He also utilized poetic formulas of foreign origin beside Armenian, aiming to make diction euphonic and melodious. When, in 1045, Grigor Magistros wrote "*Hazartoghian*" (Thousand Line), considered the first rhymed poem in Armenian literature, he gave explanations in the introduction, that he wrote it according to principles of the Koran, following forms of the Arabic *kafa*. This, and a series of similar facts have bred various opinions. A segment of experts regards rhyme to be borrowed from Arabic. Mkhitarist father Bagratuni finds that, even though rhyme occurs in ancient Armenian literature, nonetheless, he is convinced the influence of Arabic poetics on Armenian verse appears not prior to ninth century and becomes dominant after the twelfth.¹⁷ In Mkhitarist Arsen Aitenian's opinion, Armenians also copied Arabic numerical (metric) poetics. Some

Armenian writers (Ruben Vorberian, Arshak Alpoyachian) consider medieval verse as totally of Arabic influence.¹⁸

Mainly two types of rhyme were used in the Middle Ages: monorhymic poems, where the same rhyme is continuously repeated; and polyrhymic poems, with changing rhymes. Thus Magistros's *Hazartoghian ar Manuche* poem of 1,016 lines is entirely written with the rhyme *in*. Shnorhali's 3,988-line *Hisus vordi* (Jesus the Son) poem is also written in the same rhyme; the 1,595-line *Vipasanutiun est Homeri* (Epic According to Homer), is written with the rhyme *ial*, etc. It should be said, that monorhyme was a widespread format for authors of the eleventh to seventeenth centuries. A large portion of Frik's, Khachatur Kecharetsi's, Kostandin Yerznkatsi's, Arakel Siunetsi's, and other medieval poets' oeuvre is written with the same rhyme. Monorhymics was considered artistic mastery in the Middle Ages, in spite of the fact that it tired the reader considerably with its repetitious rhymes.

Ais inch krak er air-ets,
Kam inch khavar, vor zis pat-ets,
Yes vem ankhakht ei, khakht-ets,
Poghpat amur, zet jur hal-ets.

Yekav, antsav u chokh kail-ets,
Chochats u zmejken kotrt-ets,
Dardzav i het kholor hay-ets,
Andzes tesav u zahend-ets.

Այս ի՞նչ կրակ էր այրեց,
Կամ ի՞նչ խաւար, որ զիս պատեց,
Ես վէմ անխախտ էի՝ խախտեց,
Պողպատ ամուր՝ զէտ ջուր հալեց:

Եկաւ, անցաւ ու ճոխ քայլեց,
Ճոճաց ու զմէջքըն կոտորեց,
Դարձաւ ի յետ խոլոր հայեց,¹⁹
Անճըս տեսաւ ու զահընդեց:

It also happens that a portion of a poem is written in one rhyme, the rest in another. In Khachatur Kecharetsi's ninety-line "Hais ahagin

avurs" (On This Tremendous Day) chanson, thirty-six lines are in *ak* rhyme while the remaining fifty-four are in *i* rhyme. The same can be seen in Kostandin Yerznkatsi's "Orhnial e hairn" (Blessed Is the Father) or Shnorhali's "Nerboghian kensatu surb khachin" (Eulogy to the Life-Giving Holy Cross) poems and many other works. Verse in coupled rhymes, in *aabbcc* format, were rarely written in the Middle Ages.

Quatrain is the most widespread form in this period, although poems with tri-, cinq-, sest-, and octalineal stanzas were also written. In chansons with quadrilineal rhymes, those of the first three lines are repeated while the fourth line has an entirely new rhyme (*aaab*).

Blbuln yehas shakarber-*an*,
Avetaber metz haruti-*an*;
Vardin yehar kanach ver-*an*,
Vor ga, bazmi zerd hur var-*el*.

Բլբուլն եհաս շաքարբերան,
Աւետաբեր մեծ յարութեան.
Վարդին եհար կանաչ վըրան,
Որ գայ, բազմի զերդ հուր վառել:²⁰

The same can be seen in poems with more than four rhymes, where a whole stanza is written in one rhyme, while the end has a refrain with a unique rhyming (Shnorhali, Kostandin Yerznkatsi). There are also poems with lines of seven-eight syllables, every other line of which is unrhymed (*aoao*), while rhymed lines are monorhymic (Frik, Kecharetsi, Tlkurantsi).

Darn yev voghorm 'ink menatsel,
Te yerb hasnenk mer murat-*in*,
Herku dimats 'ink partakan
Mek astenis, mek anden-*in*.

Դառն եւ ողորմ 'ինք մընացել,
Թէ երբ հասնենք մեր մոռրատին,
Յերկու դիմաց 'ինք պարտական
Մէկ աստէնիս, մէկ անդէնին:²¹

Hovhannes Yerznkatsi (Pluz)

In Armenian verse of the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, Hovhannes Yerznkatsi-Pluz, Frik, Kostandin Yerznkatsi, Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, Mkrtich Naghash, Grigoris Aghtamartsi, and others are famous. Among these, Hovhannes Yerznkatsi (c. 1230-1293), who was also known by the appellation "Pluz" (for being small-bodied), was well-known as a scholar-philosopher. He was called Yerznkatsi after his birthplace, the city of Yerznka, one of the famous cities of Armenia in the thirteenth century. Yerznka, sprawled on the banks of the Euphrates river, was a city replete with gardens and orchards and had its own abbeys, monastic orders, and libraries. Grigor Tatevatsi and Vorotnetsi had even established a university in the Avag friary of Yerznka. On the other hand, trade caravans passed through Yerznka, keeping the city prosperous even during the Tatar reign. In the fourteenth century Yerznka was often a bone of contention in the hands of Tatar rulers but retained its commercial and cultural significance until the fifteenth century, producing versatile ecclesiastic activists and scholars. Famous names among these are Hovhannes Yerznkatsi and Kostandin Yerznkatsi (thirteenth century) on whose oeuvre influence of the secular and thriving environment of the mercantile city is indisputable.

Hovhannes lived in Cilicia for many years, taught in the seminary there and the schools of Yerznka. Yerznkatsi was a religious activist, famous orator, scholar, philosopher, grammarian, aesthete, writer, and poet.²² He was a famous and authoritative figure in Armenia and Cilicia.²³

Hovhannes Pluz Yerznkatsi's literary legacy consists of more than a hundred philosophical, grammatical, scientific, canonical, confessional, and other sorts of prose writings, as well as metrical poems and quatrains—a diversity which proves his broad scholarly and intellectual interests and talents.

In the history of Armenian philosophy, Yerznkatsi is considered an acclaimed figure, for which he has been given the appellations "*Banibun yev ashkharhaluis vardapet*" (Learned and Enlightened Teacher), "*Anhaght*" (Invincible), "*Khstaluis imastaser*" (Austere Philosopher), and others. In his philosophical reflections, he attempts to understand phenomena of the world; secrets of the ever-changing motions of nature; universal law; human life: birth and death; various

problems of art, pedagogy, medicine, and philosophy. Well known is his *Haghags yerknayin zarduts* (On Celestial Ornaments), an oration which he rendered metrical in 1284. He also wrote a thousand-line poem in the *an* rhyme, reminiscent of Hesiod's "Theogony" in its treatment of cosmological issues.

Of exceptional merit in Armenian letters is Hovhannes Yerznkatsi's study *Collation of Grammar Commentary*, which is considered the summation "of all that had been done in grammatics until that work."²⁴ This is a valuable interpretation of Dionysius Thrax's grammar, where Yerznkatsi also relies on commentaries of other Armenian grammarians. This treatise of Yerznkatsi, for long years serving as linguistic and reference text in the Middle Ages, "is unsurpassed in its bibliographic dependability and is the singular one, to which it is possible to refer with unreserved trust in all cases, where it is necessary to get acquainted to and research directly the linguistic-cultural and grammatical views of Davit, Ananun, Movses, Stepanos, Magistros, and Hamam," writes one of Hovhannes Yerznkatsi's latter-day researchers, Levon G. Khacherian.²⁵

As a poet, Yerznkatsi authored chansons and reflective-admonitive poems, *sharakans*, eulogies (twenty-three in number) and quatrains (sixty-three in number) secular and religious in nature.

Admonitive or didactic poetry, a distinct and prevalent type among oriental peoples in the Middle Ages, was also employed by nearly all medieval Armenian songsters and was called "*ask imastnots*" ("sayings of sages"). These are judicious and exhortative songs written in folk sensibility and parlance, imbued with moral and Christian ideas, and saturated by contemporary men's mature practice of reason. These poems do not possess a narrow moralistic character, since they handle issues of time and nationhood interwoven with the author's individual emotions and experience.

Prior to Yerznkatsi, only Shnorhali had written admonitive riddles; whereas, after him many did.

Counsel, the basis of which is religious ethics, has philosophical meaning for Yerznkatsi and, as a distinct literary genre, is didactic in its religious, scientific, and secular quality. Instructing and educating is the most basic concept for Yerznkatsi, expressed not only in his admonitions, sermons, orations, and canons but also poems. "And what is toiling?," he writes, "To go around and preach and advise; to sever, to

prune harmful evils and common sins from fruits of charity; to irrigate, to till about, to soften with the water of doctrine; and, through the example of those who accomplished these, to inspire reverence and to instruct."²⁶

In his reflective-admonitive poems, which have a secular nature, Yerznkatsi encourages lofty moral precepts: diligence, virtue, education, wisdom, and faith. Piety and enlightenment are capital topics that excite the poet.

Who is pure at heart, virtuous, holy,
Or wise in the mind, is by nature good.
But like a flower is all of glory,
If wind blew on it, soon wither it would.

Who can praise the wise in language lowly,
Or the sage's words purchase with jewel?
A lighting lamp is the learned and holy,
Those deprived of it in the dark suffer.

If thou are moon-like, with nice countenance,
And unwise in mind and profane in deed,
Thou are then like clay, painted with powder,
Which thrown in water would soon disappear.

If of race noble and prince with honor,
Or wealth abundant and house full of gold,
Yet not intellect, uncouth in spirit,
Thou are a beast brute and a calf of gold.²⁷

The first love poem written in Armenian belongs to Yerznkatsi—the chanson beginning with the line “Ais inch krak er airets” (What Was This Fire That Burned?), the content of which is the love story of a Muslim girl and an Armenian youth. This subject is a folk tale narrated in the Middle Ages, embellished by Yerznkatsi.²⁸ Here, love destroys national and religious obstacles completely; the girl accepts Christianity, and the poem ends with the victory of love, marriage; whereas in the folk tale, in the lovers' death, due to the parents' disapproval.

In his quatrains, Yerznkatsi is a philosopher poet, in front of whom, as a medieval thinker, tower issues of life and death, the inevitability of death and worldly pleasure.

"He still exhibits a Christian pessimism," writes Abeghian, "yet already altogether different from the outlook of the previous period. The world for him is no longer a valley of sighs, full of torments and troubles; but, a site of placid living, which, however, contains within it a great contradiction: death."²⁹

Yerznkatsi's world view is no longer an ascetic attitude; he does not reject the world with its charms and blissful moments entirely. And, as he writes:

This world is green furrows,
And we young partridges in it.³⁰

However, the eternal contradiction of life and death, the longing to live and the sorrow of death, find him facing a duality.

How keep mine selves together? One is earth, the other is soul;
When mine soul pulls me upwards, then mine heavy earth pulls
me down,
If to mine earth I listen, I fear it blinds light of mine soul,
And who would fly hence with soul, when its abode is far
away?³¹

Such an attitude toward needs of the human body is a considerably progressive phenomenon. Here, Yerznkatsi is a living and breathing person, unlike medieval man's wretched and helpless character. He is cognizant of novel perceptions of life and senses changes in the times and expansion of ideas, which assist him to enhance his talents and intellect.

Due to this, thoughts on the transitoriness of life have philosophical depth in Yerznkatsi's quatrains. These are written in four lines, replete with saturated meditations, where the poet's knowledge of existence and reflective intellect are evident.

Voyager, let me tell thee, so thou know the end of the road,

Thou are born into this world, but pray tell me wherefrom come
thou?

Thou have come to foreign land, but for once say why do thou
stay?

Thou die out and enter earth, but let us know, where do thou
go?³²

Take four things counsel from me, that be worth the whole
world to thee,

Do not judge sins of others, examine thine veins in thine mind,
Behold God near upon thee and the day of death remember,
These counsels plant in thine heart, from all evils they will keep
thee.³³

This world is such as a sea, whoever comes won't stay unwet,
I entered boat on this sea, I did not know when mine boat left,
I have come near the shore now, but fear with rocks it will
collide;

Mine lovely home be ruptured and mine timber will come
apart.³⁴

This world is such as a sea, and mortals swim within it,
Body is such as boat, the soul is a wealth unspoiled,
Men such as spring flower bloom and as soon dry out they will,
A thousand times blessed be the just on Day of Judgment.³⁵

The world with its enticements casts the ecclesiast Yerznkatsi into the bosom of pessimism, yet he is unable to discard his pious cleric's convictions and sing of secular life and love. On the other hand, taking refuge in the hope of redemption of sins and repentance for the salvation of soul, he is unable to deny and disavow the world. Soul and body at last acquire equivalent rights, while the tension existing between them becomes the central issue of the entire Middle Ages. With Yerznkatsi, that struggle is resolved to the advantage of the corporeal, which was then to be eulogized by later songsters. "With their novel musings, Hovhannes Pluz's poems attain a position," writes Karo Sasuni, "wherefrom only a step remains to become the panegyrist of the joy of this world."³⁶

Yerznkatsi also wrote emotion-laden religious poems, expressing agitations of his turbulent soul, infinite parental affection, desire to feel and experience beauty, warmth toward human grief and suffering. They either celebrate the heavenly, Christ and Mother of God, or bemoan Mary's sorrow and Adam who has lost paradise: "Govest berkranats" (Praise of Delights), "Adam nstel durn i drakhtin" (Adam, Sitting at the Gates of Paradise), "Astvatzatzin srbuhin" (Sancta Dei Mater). Yerznkatsi's *sharakans* are also works of religio-historical nature, with themes and patriotic spirit characteristic of the genre. Here, there is supplication for peace in the land of Armenia, protection of the Armenian people and their pontifical seat.

Yerznkatsi's secular chansons are philosophical, where his concern is man again, the issues of his unfirm condition in life, problems of education and virtue. The habits and morals, customs, good and evil inclinations, and religious questions of mankind are analyzed in concise synthesis, which is not only effective logically but is pleasing to read.

In this sense, the employment of comparative parallels, the foremost artistic technique preferred by Yerznkatsi, renders the subject easy and comprehensible with its expressive and palpable objectivity.

We are mortals, in need of good from heaven,
And as light by clouds, covered we are in sins;
As flowers on the face of the earth we spring,
And as plant for water, we too are thirsty.
We are such as a boat tossed into the sea,
Unfirm in life, as boats are, facing the wind.³⁷

Yerznkatsi has a cultivated idiom, in *grabar* or vernacular. His discourse is brisk, moving, spiced with traditional tales, proverbs, which enliven even his sermons and scientific-theological commentaries. His vocabulary is rich; there is no monotony of images and words. Yerznkatsi uses a particular style and *grabar* language when writing philosophical, religious, or propagatory works, and exhibits an entirely different approach to the matter when writing for the masses, artisans, and merchants. Here, he employs a simple and understandable conversational idiom, with uncomplicated linguistic expressions and forms.

From the standpoint of versification, his chansons are rhymed and written in various meters. While the meters of his religious poems are mixed, those of the rest are regular, bi-metric, or tri-metric, and have seven-, eight-, eleven-, twelve-, or even fifteen- and sixteen-syllable lines, à la metrics of folk songs. His "Haghags yerknayin zarduts" (On Celestial Ornaments) poem is monorhymed but rhyming in the other poems is considerably varied. Often three lines are monorhymed, while not the fourth; or the first two lines and the fourth are monorhymed, while the third not. And sometimes they are written entirely in mixed rhymes. The locution and metric system of Yerzknatsi's poems are melodic, contributing to have them, whether religious or secular, be sung in their time: "Voghb Adama" (Adam's Lamentation), "Tagh jrorhnekin" (Ode to Epiphany), "Astvatzatzin srбуhin" (Sancta Dei Mater), "Adama vordik amen" (All Adam's Children), etc.

Frik

A unique poet of the Armenian Middle Ages is Frik, with his powerful social challenges and rebellious spirit.³⁸ Nearly no information has been preserved regarding his biography. Judging from his own writings, he was born during the years of Tatar incursions (birthplace unknown), approximately between 1230-1240, probably lived in Western Armenia, and died in the first quarter of the fourteenth century.³⁹

It is unknown where Frik received his schooling; but, the works he bequeathed, with their ideological dimension and idiomatic artistry, certify their author's being a cultivated and educated personality.

Frik had a hard life during the difficult years of Mongol reign; he was robbed by Tatars, who carried off his son as a pawn for debts, turning his life into tragedy. He suffered a lonely and disconsolate old age. "Afflicted by the pelting of mortgages, vexed by creditors, shamed by rebukes, abandoned of all prospects, at the bottom of worries and sorrows, the poet tried to drown his suffering in a glass of wine, in the bosom of occasional unconsciousness"; Ashot Hovhannisian pictured Frik in such a desperate state, relying on information culled from his poetry.⁴⁰

I know not where I will be dead,

I have no one to bury me,
 I have no place where I could rest,
 I have not smiled at mine own son.
 No kin and no one do I have,
 to bewail or to pity me;
 I could not sprout nor grow can I,
 this slave is like a roasted seed.
 While I did own serfs and servants,
 was considered as important;
 however these too denied me,
 and detested my needy soul.⁴¹

Frik was acclaimed in the Middle Ages. His songs occupied an established place in manuscripts of the time and became popular and favorite chansons, due to the fact that he had a delicate and sensitive taste, restive spirit, fluent and simple plain language. Frik's oeuvre, of which more than fifty poems have reached us, is written about secular and religious subjects, reflecting the era of the Mongol-Tatar nightmare, with its social-political moods and problems.

Frik's outlook is still admonitive-didactic in nature, yet he is a writer who notices his surroundings, events of his time, and inhabits that era and its issues. Realistic elements, in relation to nature, manners, political life, or any occurrence, make their appearance in Frik's songs. The conventionalized medieval image regarding existence and the world, steadily fuse with the poet's individual experience and impression, paying more attention to the particular and material.

Standing apart in Frik's literary legacy are the works "Enddem falakin" (Against Fate), "Ban i Frik grkuin" (Dictum in Frik's Book), "Vasn Arghun ghanin yev Bughayin" (On Arghun Ghan and Bugha), "Tagh Talehi yev brji" (Song of Taleh and the Burg), "Tagh Frkann asatsial" (Song by Frik), "Kuzes vor aziz kenas" (Thou Wish to Stay Noble), "Astvatz ardar yev hiravi" (God Just and True), which he called *banker* (dicta).

The poet's national and social insight, as a historical and versified chronicle, is displayed in the "On Arghun Ghan and Bugha" poem, which he wrote in 1289. This work is valuable not only for its historical details with the display of popular sentiments, individuals and events, and grasp of the times but also elucidates Frik's bitter disposition

and attitude toward Tatar rule, the total gloom of that barbaric reign and the suffering it caused, where "no shore exists, bottom unseen."

A real historical event forms the basis of the poem; in 1289 the plot against Arghun khan is discovered; and its organizer, the sly Bugha, and fellow plotters are slain.

The author speaks congenially of Arghun, regarding him as an "ardent lover of Christians and churches." His concern is the fate of the people—the burdensome reality, wherefrom only sounds of sighs and woes are heard and where only God knows what Armenian orphans and widows have seen and borne.

Not a spring or river is there
That did not drink our weeping,
Not a mountain or plain is there,
Where bloodsuckers did not trample.
The winter whole, they went crying,
In summer they wandered scorching,
For twenty years we bore tortures,
And decreased to just skin and bones;
We are only barely breathing,
No sense, feeling are left in us⁴²

The curse of the people reaches heaven, and God punishes the plotters enslaving the nation. Frik expresses his aversion in righteous ire toward the Tatar bloodsuckers, who ravaged the prosperous land with their taxes and forced the people to dislocate.⁴³ The author's conception, similar to other medieval thinkers, viewed such tribulations as renumeration for sins committed by him and the people and, entreating the "righteous and true judge," implored that these tortures end and the nation be saved from Tatars.

Though the thoughts and sentiments against pilferers uttered vexedly, characterized by gloomy alternations of invective and supplication, do not remove Frik from the bounds of the mentality of his time; yet, by those same human eruptive effusions, they convey patriotic and social animus to this extensive poem, where the author's fervent soul and issues exciting the man of the era are evident.

Frik generally rebels against every kind of oppression and injustice and expresses his compassionate ideas affectionately and

How many wives widows they turn,
And how many Christians orphan?
How much blood on earth have they spilled?
How long spoke out they words wretched?

How far in this world torture us,
And openly plunder our lives?
And thou everybody forgive,
Turn a blind eye toward our grief.⁴⁶

God's sentence is unjust, since the impending scourges are intolerable for a hapless and pious nation. So, he reproaches the Lord and revolts embitteredly, proposing to exterminate to the last Armenian, if he be considered a no "good" and "worthy" creature.

Lord, won't thou seek revenge deserved,
And show all thine eye omniscient?
Thou know, bodies of flesh are we,
And not statues made of iron.

Not reed are we, nor savage grass,
That thou will scorch upon a fire,
Like unto a meadow thornful,
Or underbush of the forest.

If ired by the Armenian race,
Just like the Jews of Israel,
Let all anger pouring from thee,
Come down and pile upon our head.

Now, if for naught worthy are we,
Nor any good deeds have we done,
Or to thine heart hateful are we,
For having not acted by law,

Come, wipe us out to the last one,
So thine good heart satisfied be;
If then by thine will this happen,
Generous God omnipotent.⁴⁷

The inequalities and contradictions existing in legal and economic spheres also disturb the poet Frik, so he comes forward in defense of social truth. Why should one live over hundred, while the other die prematurely; one be born genius, another ignoramus; one beautiful, the other ugly; one fortunate, another unfortunate; one rich, another poor?

Let the whole of this come to pass,
That I uttered about my race;
And was this thine word of command,
Dispassionate, righteous judge?

That one person live a decade,
And one live more than a hundred;
One to reach ten be able not,
To die within two or three months.

One have only a single son,
And, lo, he be untimely done;
One have plenty of descendants,
Of whom not one hair be absent.

He who is mere servant lives long,
The one-hundred-year-old gives birth;
The thirty-year-old youth falls down,
And to flounder upon the ground.

She be maiden, find her demise,
The biteless crone be energized;
He who wants life, it be shortened,
Who grays find it not important.

Or else how could these things happen,
And how come it is evident?
That one possess numerous heirs,
While the other remain childless.

One through lineage nobleman be,
One a beggar by family;
To one, thousands of horse and mule,
To one, not a fawn, nor an ewe.

To one, thousands of golden coins,
To one, not a copper florin;
To one, thousands beads of pearl,
To one, not a glassy pebble.

To one, thousands sheep with lamb,
To one, not a four-legged beast;
To one, muslin and regal dress,
To one, not a woolen shawl be.⁴⁸

Although the poet is unable to understand the causes of all these and cannot trust fair-minded God's impartial conduct, even then in the end, he humbly submits to God and remains loyal to the Christian spirit of his time and environment.

Mea culpa to the heavens,
Lord God fearful magnificent;
Truly righteous is thine judgment,
With a purpose to each given.⁴⁹

The moral decline of medieval social life in all its aspects and classes, coupled with economic inequality, was common to the state of affairs in the Orient and Europe—a phenomenon that penetrated literature, too. Such was the content of many French troubadour chansons, certain sequences of Saadi's *Pandnamah*. In this sense, within Armenian reality, Frik was that songster who, with his sharp intellect, understanding and observation of environment, and profound realization of the unjust order of society, exposed mores of his day. In the poem "Vasn anmiabanutian kristoneits" (On the Disunity of Christians), Frik describes notables of the Christian world, Franks, Romans, Russians, Georgians, and others, in incisive and characteristic attributes, rebukes them all, regarding every one indiscriminately guilty and lost in sins.

All are haters of each other,
 For which Gentiles trample us,
 Christians should be in heavy sin,
 So long to be bearing torture . . .
 Or else, for which nation's errors
 Persecuted the churches are?
 The rulers do not reconcile,
 Hold grudges one for the other,
 Always armies they assemble
 And by sword they slay each other.⁵⁰

Patriarchs are money-lovers, kings quarrelsome and bloodthirsty, clerics avaricious and corrupt; in a word, a bleak and gloomy scene over which hang sins of mankind. Here, too, Frik comes to the same conclusion—he considers sin a source of suffering and pleads with God for pardon and deliverance of Christian nations.

Death and the notion of vanity of life do not sound in tragic hues with Frik, since he views death as salvation for sufferers and unfortunates. Whereas the fact that death treats all strata of society equally, also wipes out inequities and differences among men, leading everyone indiscriminately to the last, same terminus.

Frik wrote philosophical songs, supplicational prayers as well as admonitions with religious content and satirical quality. In his religious songs "Ban pitani" (Dictum Dear), "Vasn hogo" (On Soul), "Ban vogeshah" (Dictum Gainful), "Norinn Frkann asatsial havato" (Again on Faith by Frik) the central issue is the redemption of soul, the prospect of last judgment. In this aspect, he followed conventions of medieval religious poetry, thus becoming one of the Armenian mystic songsters. But what differentiates Frik from the others is his internal impulse which, combined with folkloric element and simplicity of idiom, make his poems emotive. Christian ethics is a guidepost for Frik, and he is able to explain each thesis of the Gospel through his experience and faith. The examples to lend a hand to the needy, to despise wealth and glory, not to judge others, to keep the soul pure and immaculate sound not as dry religious sermons but inferences of lifetime experience, a desire to see man human, in his loftiness, grandeur, and innocence—something which he had not found in his surrounding, within that dismal reality, trampling and annihilating everything. This was not only a

question of faith or scriptural tribute, but a dream to see man and the world in their original purity.

Frik is a man of his time with the outlook of his era and intense sentimentality. The profoundness of feelings and mastery of idiom which he totally controls make his religious, admonitive songs to be works of art, where his period and he, himself, with the simplicity of his soul and charms of his discourse, are reflected entirely.

The lamp of my body is dark,
The eye of my soul has turned bad;
Sight of the poor for me is hard,
Pity on me, Lord, indulgent.
To giving alms I did not heed,
Nor put my dime in the platter,
I did not pull out thorns of sin,
And so I am blind in my eyes.
Lazy in prayer and infrequent,
I have not been to the chapels;
Hell will be mine on the morrow,
For sinful I am and unlearned.
Thousands of beams are in my eye,
Each beam as huge as a rafter;
To others I say pluck the mote,
Worthless I am and good-for-naught.⁵¹

The greater portion of Frik's legacy has religious content. It consists of artistically written and rhymed songs, which cultivate a taste— to remember national, religious traditions, the Holy Bible, precepts of morality and benevolence with which the poet's milieu lived and breathed.

Frik is an interesting figure, not only for his poetic insight, inner burning essence and ability to express suffering of the soul but also for his skill in poetic artistry, techniques in constructing verse, and clarity of unfettered idiom. In his "*hogeshah*" (gainful) songs he not only employs the common dialect but also proverbs created in accordance to folk mentality and thoughts that have philosophical profundity. And within just one or two lines he is capable of drawing generalized, concise, and lively images.

Better to be wise in this world,
Than to have wealth transitory ...

Or:

He who digs holes for innocents,
Will be falling into the pit ...

Or:

Although wealth and garments thou have,
Yet like beggar do thou behave ...

Or:

What gain is thine human figure, that thou have yet feel it not,
In daylight thou with sin comport and at night sleep worried
not?
If thou would bring back thine senses and know the cure for
thine soul,
And realize wherefrom thou came or where thou are going from
hence.⁵²

Frik's secular dicta are written in common, conversational idiom while the religious, admonitive, and philosophical songs in mixed *grabar*. The plain idiom also introduced rhyming characteristic to folk songs, internal meter, and rhythm, which rendered the poem light and resonant, despite its moralistic nature. A large number of the songs are written in long lines, which are easily staved into four lines while the rest, fewer in number, are quatrains.

Frik employed various versification techniques and meters, but foremost preferred the *hairen* meter (lines rhymed in between or monorhymed and in seven or eight, eight or seven, eight or eight syllables).

The poetic imagery is effective, the medium varied; the analogies and comparisons are lively and colorful, however sometimes unpolished and hard to understand. At times, though, soaring of the

imagination creates rewarding and communicative lines, where this poet of the Middle Ages is evident with his pleasing sentiments of luminous experience.

Plant me in the good earth, so I will firmly hold,
Southern winds of spring blow, so that I will flower.
Prune me and dig weeds out, that I wake and be spright,
Dew of life pour on boughs of my heart, to soften.
Irrigate me in gush, so that I green and bud;
Do not leave me leafless, flowerless, so I will dry.
Nourish me and cure, so on time I give thee fruit;
Barren am I, arid, no moist to make me spright.
Wet me, Lord, in pity, let my fruit be tasty;
I beg of thee, the king, thine gifts proud will make me.⁵³

Frik's poems are profound; they treat social and philosophical concepts and are related to the spirit and aspirations of more modern times. It seems he breaks with medieval Armenian songsters and acts in social consciousness steeped in religious spirit. And that awareness penetrated the depths of issues of the era and exposed the disconsolate condition of disharmonious existence and environment when no one knew, as he puts it, the real value of "pearl" and "jewel." However, his lofty aspirations do not expire in that atmosphere but steadily and undoubtedly attempt to reach "grand sacraments." The emotions of his soul, like an overflowing spring, are reflected in his "Song by Frik" chanson which, in its simple idiom and picturesque comparisons, is a beautiful page of medieval literature:

Morning of peace, in thine light I will remain.
As fish from salty sea to thine sweet water I come;
From thine Israelite rock, droughted I seek water.
Thou are spring of life, wet my thirst so I will cool;
Not gold, not silver, nor the world do I desire.
To thine sight I long, for this I tither all day;
Gather me, Lord, to Thee, so that I will see Thee ...
When long gone, after death I turn into dust,
For Frik I not despair, nor in love be wanting.
Beside Thee I have no kin, where can I go from here ... ?⁵⁴

Kostandin Yerznkatsi

Secular meditations toward life and nature found more prominent literary reflection in medieval songsters Kostandin Yerznkatsi's, Hovhannes Tlkurantsi's, Mkrtych Naghash's, Grigoris Aghtamartsi's lyricism, imprinting a distinct influence on the subsequent character of Armenian poetry. Even though clerics, these bards gave a healthy dose to Armenian poesy, singing the awakening and wonders of nature, sun and love, rose and nightingale, woman and her beauty. The God-fearing and God-loving monks, who in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries had also become world-loving, were chanting not only religious songs but readily listening to minstrels and even copying their vivacious motifs and poetic meters.

Monastic poetry was slowly distancing from religious and mystical sentiments and nearing life. From this viewpoint, Kostandin Yerznkatsi is the first singer of love and nature in medieval Armenian literature.⁵⁵ While Hovhannes Yerznkatsi and Frik introduced realistic-wordly outlook into literature and took a giant step toward man and his life, Kostandin Yerznkatsi became the first versifier who established *personal lyricism*. Yerznkatsi was the first to make individual grief, love, feelings of loneliness, people of his surrounding the subject of poetry.

Opulent and verdant Yerznka, where Kostandin (c. 1250-c. 1328) was born, had 40,000-50,000 inhabitants in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries and was the center of Yekeghiats province. Through here passed trade caravans, minstrel troupes, and singers, who brought oriental cheerful songs, stories, and fairy-tales. Perhaps it was the bustle of this prosperous city that inspired young Yerznkatsi to prefer the secular song and lyric and feel the magnificence of love.

Few facts are preserved regarding his biography. It is known that he was a clergyman and started writing in early age. Twenty-seven of his lyrics (with their variants) have reached us, spiritual and moralistic in nature. Yerznkatsi was a child of his time and had to write "proper" dicta, inevitably touching upon spiritual themes. In this sense, as a moralist and spiritual thinker, Yerznkatsi is not different from writers of, or prior to, his era. However, he often parts ways with his spiritual religious conceptions and looks upon life as a common mortal.

He is delighted with nature, love of woman and his ecclesiast's essence is shaken by secular feelings.

As a complete personality, Yerznkatsi is honest in his spiritual sentiments; though on the other hand, he is unable to control the profound admiration he feels toward the world and existence. The difficulty of choice between rights of the soul and body compels the poet to uphold equality of the two forces, as equivalent values.

It is hard to do what the soul demands, since the body pulls towards mother earth with its weight. This philosophy had ancient roots in medieval Armenian thought. Greek philosophers believed that there were two conflicting forces within human nature—rational and non-rational. The rational was the celestial while the non-rational was the earthly, the reconciliation of which in one essence was considered impossible. Yerznkatsi emulated the same reasoning and unconditionally declared the duality of his soul, seemingly protesting for it ("Krkniat pataskhani aispes i dem" [Second Reply Against]).

My soul is very willing
 to hear sages speak;
My body is lustful
 for of the world it is born;
Between the two
 I am candle, burning in flame,
Groundless and unfirm,
 restlessly I go about.⁵⁶

Slave of two wills
 it is hard for me to get along,
Or to put the flame in my bosom
 and keep myself free of harm,
Or by corporeal feet
 walk lightly upon the sea,
Or stop the swiftly blowing wind
 merely by the hand.⁵⁷

As justification for being enticed by songs of nature and love instead of the spiritual, Yerznkatsi writes:

There are some dear brothers,
 Who asked writings on the world;
 For this reason in well known rhyme,
 Things of love I repeated.⁵⁸

Yerznkatsi's religious meditations are displayed in his allegorical songs which are considered spiritual dicta, though inundated with descriptions of nature and warmth of earthly life. This was a higher quality compared to the songs of Narekatsi. Here, the allegory does not suffocate the thought nor emotion; it is simple and accessible, charming and brilliant. And, it is in these that Yerznkatsi's talent sparkles, drenching the gray palette of Armenian lyricism with bright colors of love and light.

The songs "Bank herku dems" (Dicta on Two Selves), "Bank haghags aregakann" (Dicta on the Sun), "Ais garuns" (This Spring) are written with spiritual inspiration and animated feelings of the charms of spring. The allegorical meaning, related to religious conceptions of resurrection and judgment, sinner and innocent in Christian doctrine, is presented through a variety of phenomena and hues, sounds and whispers of nature, and delicate poetic observation.

Yerznkatsi understands the concept of Christ as gospel to mankind which, sweeping away sadness and pain, was to warm the "dark and bleak" frozen earth with vernal sun and radiant goodness—a thought, from the exuberance of which the universe rejoices, rivers and seas overflow, birds sing, flowers blossom; the whole animal and plant world starts to live and is decorated.

It is a wedding in the universe,
 It is rejoicing of fruitfulness;
 Colorfully, race after race,
 Flowers have decorated the earth.

The sea wriggles in affection,
 The earth and the sea start to boil;
 Gushing fountains, cool and breezy,
 Start to spring forth out of the rocks.

Rivers ever cry frightfully,

Gushing come down the mountainside,
Roaming about and expanding,
They embrace the ocean with love.

Canes and goats play with each other,
Amble to the plain and the springs;
The game and the wild animals
Have been set free of their chains.

The fowl come in sweet voices,
Psalming with the swallow,
The lark arrives and is reading,
Glorification to morn.⁵⁹

Description of the dawn is daintier and charming in the poem "Dicta on Two Selves" where, although the tendency is religious, but, as Yerznkatsi writes, it is also possible to understand "corporeally." This song is a matchless laudation of daylight, personified as the birth of darkness-dispelling light, source of life and merriment, symbol of resurrection and immortality—attributes, which have also been preserved in popular prayers describing daylight.

If life or festivity
 is my lot at the gate of love,
A moment of love from the heart,
 let it happen to me on the morn;
If need it be to give a life,
 or take the soul of man,
I heartily am willing
 to give up my soul for my love,

He who wishes to be in love
 with light, son of resurrection,
Let him request of that love
 which arises in the morning;
Love be ever added to love,
 to go to the house of love in joy;

And who follows in the steps of love,
 with love greet the morning.⁶⁰

The sun is the inexhaustible source of light, as Christ is the bulwark of justice. The poet's creedal apprehensions find an equivalent asset in nature—the sun, which spreads animation and warmth to the world and gives birth to life everywhere.

The earth became animate
 and mount and plain dressed in green,
 The trees brought forth flowers,
 in the great light of the sun;
 Flowers are decorated
 in race upon race of hues,
 The crimson rose opens up,
 in the great light of the sun.

The springs start overflowing
 and merrily start to run,
 The rivers are awinding,
 in the great light of the sun.
 Whatever creature there is,
 or any soul to death done,
 Animated are they now
 in the great light of the sun.⁶¹

Although the light and sun, adulated with pagan fervor, ensue from Yerznkatsi's lofty apprehension of nature and carry its living breath, in reality they are symbols, attributes of Christ, characterizing spiritual "light" and "justice."

Manuk Abeghian writes:

His song, then, is composed such that it appears he is glorifying the real physical sun and is describing merely the rise of morning light in its motions and effects; but, in truth, it is not so. Together with the inspiration received from physical light and sun, dominant is the sentiment of a pious Christian toward the sun of justice and its birth; so that he simultaneously sings the

material, and intelligible lights; the physical sun, and the sun of justice; or, as the author himself characterizes aptly, he creates "Dicta on two selves perceived by mind in soul and in body." And this is what gives his poem a distinct power and grandeur. Usage of the words "just" and "intelligible" releases our religious poet's wings; he now flies freely in his beloved nature and sings light, morning, rise of sun, happy spring, such as he feels and grasps nature. Consequently our poetics acquired a novel literary genre—*lyricism of nature*, where a large place is occupied by the poet's personal impressions of nature and emotions, with an inner warmth and religious mysteriousness or "mysticalness," as the ancients used to say. While the age-old worship of light and sun had entered Christian beliefs only as a symbol-insignia, that symbol now became a subject of song in itself in our poesy.⁶²

In the symphony of Yerznkatsi's description of vernal beauty, a special place is reserved to his rose and nightingale romance, which is probably the most charming in Armenian literature.

In world literature, and particularly in the Orient, many have entertained this allegorical subject: Saadi (thirteenth century), Hafiz (fourteenth century), Jalaluddin Rumi (thirteenth century), and others, such as the famous "Le Roman de la Rose" in thirteenth-century French literature, and Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* in the late Italian Renaissance (sixteenth century).

Among oriental peoples, the rose and nightingale romance allegory was considered a roving theme. Earliest examples of this in Arabic literature are known from the twelfth century. The rose is the loving maiden, while the chirping nightingale the suitor aflame by passion and fragrance of the rose. Poets of the Persian, Arab, Armenian, Georgian, Turkish, Uzbek, and other oriental peoples have sung the mutual love of these two wonders of nature in different times with different artistic skills. The nightingale is personified as messenger of attachment in troubadour poetry of France, a guardian of devotion in Persian literature, and a symbol of love in medieval Armenian chansons.⁶³ Even then, the rose and nightingale allegory wore a religious outfit in Armenian state of affairs and became a subject of literature.

The basis of allegorical thinking is that the world, existence, is viewed as earthly and heavenly reality, meaning struggle between soul and body. "The debate between soul and body, heaven and earth," writes Ghazinian, "raged necessarily and did not die out until it naturally achieved victory of the corporeal, victory of the earth. That is why within the same poet sincere religious sentiments are often interwoven with his fervent thirst toward life, gloomy images of afterworld with devotion and attachment to the world, worship of holy trinity with pagan elemental naturism. Allegorical thinking as medium for artistic imagery is, of course, older than the Christian world view of the twin aspects of reality. The rose and nightingale allegory is also antique. It was, probably, a widespread form of folk art creation in the ancient Orient; and, it was only later that it took a Christian look, being reinterpreted from a religious point of departure."⁶⁴

Allegory, which in medieval Armenian literature is displayed as a novel type of artistic reasoning, has a religious meaning in the romance of rose and nightingale but then with secular content. And although Yerznkatsi titles it "Dicta speaking of Christ by example of the rose," it is hard to consider it as religious allegoric dicta.

Vernal flowers cover the earth and colorful pennates sing sweetly, turning the world into a florid orchard. The violet and lily, "fragrant" daffodil, narcissus and canker, burning with envy, plot to nip the bud of the as yet unopened rose, when suddenly the nightingale, who is the suitor of the rose, announces to the flowers, that the rose has awakened "in her green tent." The flowers wither, flee to the mountains, or go into mourning; the decorous rose sprawls her charms and perfume, and thus starts the panegyric of love between rose and nightingale. The symphonic beauty of nature with its colors, birds, and blossoms, emanates from love, which is an unsurpassed feeling, and is lofty, pure, far from being an expression of gratification, and rises from procreative sources.

That, Love is the tree and love is the flower,
 and love, the sound of the bird on the tree,
 Love is the rose and love the nightingale
 sitting on the rose in love;
 Love is why colorful
 and beautiful are the flowers,

It is for love that little birds
have come to sit on the flowers.

I am alive only through love,
spreading out my leaves in love,
And if ever love parts from me,
By storm and wind swept will I be.

So here I am, decorated,
my leaves like unto flame burning,
And I open depth of my heart
for you to see, it is golden;
Open my heart and caress it
and fill yourself with your dear love,
For here they come to pluck me out
and you'll find naught in the garden.

Nightingale, do not be surprised
at the sweet look of my bright rose,
For whoever does not have love,
would also have no beauty there.⁶⁵

While the allegory of love between rose and nightingale might somewhat have religious inclination, in his secular songs Yerznkatsi already sings real human love, coupled with enjoyment of natural beauty: "Hogi, acherus im luis" (Dear, Light of My Eyes), "Tagh siro" (Love Song), "Tagh siro azniv" (Song of Noble Love), "Aylots ainchap bartsir" (Others So Much You Unburdened). In this aspect, he becomes the senior romancist in Armenian literature, since Narekatsi's romantic songs about woman were allegoric; and, after him, in the period stretching to Yerznkatsi, there is no other poet who wrote romantic verse.

Yerznkatsi was the first to reconcile Christian outlook with secular sentiments and describe the beauty and charm of woman rapturously, without allegory. Although it is possible to consider this Yerznkatsi's intrepidity, it also means that the secular had attained its right. No doubt, he was influenced by contemporary minstrel songs; yet, noticeable is also that imprint of medieval mystical outlook which

Yerznkatsi fosters toward love, viewing woman as a holy perfection, for whom he has profound reverence and aspires to unite with and be consoled by her. While the mystic was imploring God for divine love and enlightenment, with almost equal force, pure and noble yet pagan passion, Yerznkatsi adored his mistress and desired to win her affection. For him this is an entirely other world, where the energy of secularization is felt. Yerznkatsi neither instructs nor rebels, like Frik; he is not excited by issues of his era; he freely sings love and fills his being with the pleasure of existence and life. Immediacy and desire to enjoy life overflow in his songs and, drunken with his own emotions, man is satiated by the spirit of secularization.

In the poem "Song of Spring and Merriment," the awakening of vernal nature is seen as the origin of love and happiness; the love-full poet calls to all whose hearts are swollen with love. Not only flowers and orchards are in the throes of rejoice but also the human soul, thrilled by the enjoyment of romantic beauty, drunken with wine and love.

I have many cures for love,
I saw the rose had opened,
The crimson leaves were burning,
Arranged as if they are eyes.

We will gather in the field,
Blbul is in to the tavern,
Butler to the great bright house,
They will come and give us wine.

Butler, fill and pass the cup,
My heart yearns for your passion,
So I will drink that goblet,
Which is brimming with wine.⁶⁶

The oriental motifs of enjoying woman and wine become subjects of lyricism. Real woman, whom he calls *morch* (sprig), is young and slender, endowed with divine beauty.

You are like the light of the sun,
Like the moon you enslaved me,

How can you set in front of me?
Come to me, light of my eyes.

From ceaselessly wandering about,
From pleading and from crying long,
Slumber has departed my eyes;
Come to me, light of my eyes.

Lips that are like candy and sweet,
Face like fully colored flowers,
Ebony eyes and arched eye-brows;
Come to me, light of my eyes.

You go to the mountains and plains,
I go about asking for you,
You are the sultan of the flowers;
Come to me, light of my eyes.⁶⁷

The poet does not find a worthy beauty on earth equal to woman—a beauty which sheds light in his darkened soul shining at times as sun and moon, at others turning into his “light of the eyes.” The poet describes his mistress’s luminous figure with “Dear, light of my eyes,” “You are light with a moon face, you come out full like moon,” “Lo bright countenance and glowing image,” and numerous other expressions. Yerznkatsi’s love is not only a scorching beauty but also the reason for living, life-giving source, explosion of emotions, expressed with intimacy and sincerity.

This is no more the figure of Mother of God, though she is luminous like her, perfect and immaculate. Yerznkatsi’s “sprig” is a lively and breathing creature who loves to sing and dance, wears bright, colorful dresses. As much as her external nature, gait, manner of speech, and “glowing countenance” are animated, her internal character, young and merry, free and sweet-tongued, is equally attractive.

The love Yerznkatsi sang is not physical sensation. He admires woman’s real and breathing beauty but from afar, without reaching her. That sensation, tied with all its nuances to the inner psychic world of man, is characterized as normal, worldly enjoyment as well as longing, missing, separation, or melancholy.

Here I am longing for her love,
 As the thirsty earth for the dew,
 Or for the sweet breeze of the spring,
 When the southern winds start blowing.

Since I have lost sight of my love,
 My nourishment in life is gone,
 Tears and sighs have surrounded me,
 As have heartaches and agony.⁶⁸

The power and charm of love are reflected in Yerznkatsi's lyrics in comprehensive measure with the colorful style and picturesque comparisons of folk love songs. It is not in vain that a student of Armenian medieval bardism, Valeri Bryusov, speaking of the poem "Dictum Modeled After Spring," writes:

With the forcefulness and momentum of idiom and composition, the boema would have brought honor to any literature of Western Europe in that century; and, Europe does not even possess anything to contrapose it with. By the spirit permeating it and with all its features, the boema belongs to the gigantic flow of the Renaissance which, at that time, was barely occupying the progressive countries of Europe, and had entered the distant mountains of Armenia through unknown trails.⁶⁹

Through Yerznkatsi's dictum ("Some Malign Me Due to Envy") we learn that he was hurt by the people and milieu of his time. They not only did not appreciate Yerznkatsi's talent and wisdom but also maligned and persecuted him. The poet cannot find explanation for all this, so his gentle soul is grieved. Possibly, the authentic experiences of emotion and beauty expressed in his secular songs sounded bizarre in that environment, since they collided with the traditional mentality of Christianity in the Middle Ages, eliciting opposition and persecution against the poet. So, embittered by it, he wrote lyrical verse, personal in nature, not only complaining of disputes with jealous and ignorant men but generally vexed and succumbing amid the rough waters of life, often

close to Frik's extent of suffering and defiance ("Dictum on Wicked Friends ...").

He who was wolf now is a lamb,
 in the eyes of men he looks dumb;
Grazing he goes out with the lambs
 to secretly swallow them up;
They have turned into half-doctors,
 saying they have very swift cures;
They stab the quick right in the heart;
 to the sick they are death-bearers.

Their burden being very light,
 they wish hard times upon others;
And they appear to be learned
 and wise, while in fact so stupid;
They have no soul with an insight,
 fallen very sick due to sin,
Their bodies they have emblazoned
 beautifully and very bright.⁷⁰

Yerznkatsi is alone ("Dicta Spoken in an Hour of Sadness ...") amid that envious and malevolent mass, his heart "full of blood"; so, he protests. His inner pride does not allow him to succumb, so he talks to himself and confides to the page his worries which are personal, keenly felt thoughts on the internal world, apprehensions, and emotions of medieval man.

I do not have one dear to me
 whether family or foreign,
Who would pity me with his heart,
 or call me brother in mercy;
Who can I ask of about this,
 to give me advice willingly,
As to wherefor the whole wide world
 detests me so violently?
Whoever I accept with love,
 or whoever speaks to my heart,

Turns out then that on the surface
 he showed me love but was faulty.⁷¹

Perplexed against wicked and mindless men, he places the figure
 of the sage on a pedestal:

The wise man is like the morning,
 who bears tidings with rejoicing,
 While the mindless is in the dark,
 within his sleep soundly dreaming;
 The sagacious, like the daystar
 is brilliant and so full of hope,
 While the unwise sits in the dark,
 with all his household full of pain.

The wise man is like an orchard
 full of flowers all colorful,
 While the unwise's heart is full
 of somber and ominous frost;
 The sage is a virtuous fruit,
 that has the taste of deathlessness,
 While the mindless is unfruitful,
 deserted and chock-full with thorns.⁷²

On the other hand, these are songs which expose the relationships, manners, and thinking of the time, which determine the poet's attitude toward his surroundings, and which assist in understanding him. The psychological authenticity, in this and previous songs, infiltrates a series of details. Sometimes he tells of a specific figure or sentiment, without embellishment, in earthly sketches, and real men with their shortcomings and dignity. Though poetic conventions are dominant, in many instances the protagonists of the verse cease to be symbols and allegory, progressing from the conditional to the distinct.

Yerznkatsi candidly declares his convictions regarding knowledge, education, nobility, and wisdom. Like Hovhannes Yerznkatsi, Kostandin Yerznkatsi is considered a reflective poet and has written admonitive and moralistic chansons.

His admonitive and philosophical poems emanate from experience and analyze essential aspects of society and time. Of these are "On the Mindless Speaking Untruth," "Others So Much You Unburdened," "Thus Another Reply in Answer," "On Brotherhood," "Counsel Commonly Good ...," "New Kostandin Dicta," "Dicta on Transient Greatness," etc.

Yerznkatsi's admonitives demonstrate the author's own religious-spiritual character, since they are a devout Christian's recommendations, based on precepts of the Holy Bible. Here, the poet is a person of his time and the ideologist of his milieu.

Whoever has immense erudition
is celebrated by people;
If he does not equally have love,
grounded only in science,
The knowledge of the divine he
would not learn with his proud heart,
Such as when founded on waters
is a structure impermanent.

However much great you become,
Lie low, humble in front of men;
However much sage you become,
do not speak all to mindless men;
Do not be angry with the poor,
So you won't be judged by God;
Do not dig a hole for your friend,
for it might be for you, in fact.⁷³

As intense as Yerznkatsi's aspiration to grasp nature and inner delight was, equally consistent is his defense of human intellect and wisdom, justice, and prudence ("Others So Much You Unburdened").

It is notable that many of these songs by Yerznkatsi having moralistic and didactic content are written with such capability, that they never at all concede to his nature and love chansons. Human nature, psychology, and conduct with their nuances are reflected and arrayed with such mastery that Yerznkatsi is manifested not as a moralist-cleric

but rather as a philosopher-psychologist ("Counsel Commonly Good and Useful ...").

Do not be proud within yourself,
 because you own treasures and wealth;
 Or because you are strong in arms,
 victorious in every battle;
 Or that in mind you are as wise,
 such as was Solomon himself;
 Or that in soul you are so pure,
 holy, and virtuous inside.

If you are learned and astute,
 possess learning and have talent,
 Then you are a blossoming tree,
 which has given forth fruit useful;
 Thirsty human and the hungry,
 who to your neighborhood tarries,
 He will be savoring your fruit,
 whatever your lips be speaking.

If you are unwise in the mind,
 and wicked with the devil's work,
 Then you are like unto wild tree,
 which does not give forth fruit useful;
 You are good-for naught to people,
 a thorn, biting as viperous snake,
 And whoever touches that thorn,
 brings injury to his body.⁷⁴

In these poems, written with intimate emotions, very often folk sayings and proverbs, Solomon's admonitions, and ideas of ancient philosophers are utilized. Themes and forms of Arabic and Persian lyricism have also influenced the author. Persian words and phrases form a noticeable quantity in the vocabulary (*sarkhosh*, *azar*, *mtrup*, *beshtar*, *saghi*, *lutf u karam*, *shams u ghamar*, *nakhshi divar*, *jar u jafa*, *patishah u ghan*). One of the poems, titled "Dicta On Transient Greatness ...," is even written in the meter of Firdawsi's *Shahnamah*,

called *Motakarib* (with eleven-syllable lines, where the second, fifth, eighth, and eleventh syllables are accented).⁷⁵ Yerznkatsi mentions *Shahnamah* and writes: "A man sitting, was reciting in *Shahnamah* tone; then brothers asked, recite a poem for us in *Shahnamah* tones; so I composed these dicta; read it in *Shahnamah* tone."⁷⁶ It is assumed from this, that in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, not only was Firdawsi's *Shahnamah* told and sung in Armenia but that there was a demand to write poems in "tones" of the *Shahnamah*.⁷⁷

Fundamentally though, the effect of Yerznkatsi's chanson emanates from skills in excellent and delicate arrangement of comparisons, be it landscape or ethics. In their variety the images are fresh, have depth, and elegant allegorical texture.

All of the flowers withered up,
the half of them shed down their leaves,
Another half took hasty flight
to go up high and harsh mountains;
Another half because of shame
dressed blue and went into mourning,
And another half due to fear
and awe trembled and became pale.⁷⁸

O enslaved heart, full of blood,
how long can you go on burning?
Or for the sake of this false life
how long can you go on worried?
Quickly awaken from your sleep,
how could you hope on your vain dream?
And shed your intoxication
and carry on your heart's desire.⁷⁹

Often in a few words he explicates an entire character or philosophy:

Whoever can not a sad heart
Keep happy, how can he be praised?

Or, as nature description and imagery, exclaims:

It is a wedding in the universe ...

The interrogatory and exclamative words and expressions, the lively style of discourse animate the songs and simultaneously communicate the internal world of the poet. In turn, the subject of the lyric with its novel dimension secularized Armenian verse. The rich vocabulary is displayed in numerous poetic techniques: sharp comparisons, contrasts, expressions of popular thought, juxtapositions, etc. The free disposition of ideas in artistic arrangements of words, delicately and with a unique capacity for rhymes and accent, creates a harmony between the lines and stanzas of the poem, making them euphonic and musical.

And the musicality itself is based on various verse forms. The four-lined and eight-lined poetic stanzas are melodious and highly metrical. They are iamb lyrics (in four-member or bi-member meters) which have different rhyming schemes. In imitation of minstrel songs, the first three lines of four-lined stanzas have similar rhymes, while the fourth has another.

Yerkirs e mair annemani,
Zinch geghetsik irk tzenani,
Shat barutiunk hink senani,
Hants vor perin geghetskatsel.

Երկիրս է մայր անըմանի,
Զինչ գեղեցիկ իրք ծընանի,
Շատ բարու թիւնք յինք սընանի,
Հանց որ փըռին գեղեցկացել:

Or, sometimes, all four lines are monorhymed:

Hogi, acherus im *luis*,
Yerb vor i dimatss yelnus
Pakhchis, yerb vor zis tesnus,
Khghcha ko geruis, im *luis*.

Du zluis acherus arnus,
Te zis kez otar tesnus,

Du yes hogi im hoguis,
Khghcha ko geruis, im luis.

Հոգի՛, աչերուս իմ լոյս,
Երբ որ ի դիմացս ելնուս
Փախչիս, երբ որ զիս տեսնուս,
Խղճա՛ քո գերոյս, իմ լոյս:

Դու զլոյս աչերուս առնուս՝
Թէ զիս քեզ օտար տեսնուս,
Դո՛ւ ես հոգի իմ հոգոյս,
Խղճա՛ քո գերոյս, իմ լոյս: ⁸¹

As to the eight-lined dicta, they are written in most varied rhymes.

The language of Yerznkatsi's poems is Middle Armenian, the conversational idiom of the time which, however, is mixed with *grabar* and is not uniform. This is not true for his religious dicta, written in *grabar*.

Yerznkatsi's verse has been translated into English, French, Russian, Romanian, and Bulgarian.

Hovhannes Tlkurantsi

One of the famous romancists of the Middle Ages is Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, who lived and wrote in Cilicia during the second half of the fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth centuries.⁸² Almost nothing is known about him.

A few scholars have pictured him in clerical garb, while a few others, as a minstrel, *tar* in hand. Either way, currently forty admonitive-moralistic, romantic, and religious songs are ascribed to him, for which Tlkurantsi composed melodies and sang himself. Unlike his predecessors, the poetic unification of nature and love, which had first been described in *sharakans* and spiritual songs, does not have religious conception with him but is entirely secular. Because joie de vivre was reinforced and spread during Tlkurantsi's era, in life and situation man had become more interesting than theological and religious issues.

Christian apprehensions, of course, remained the same; yet, undoubtedly, these were influenced by novel sentiments of the time, a pagan humanist spirit which added to Christian humanism. And due to all these, the freedom to praise love came forth as panegyric to body and secular emotions, which sounds natural with Tlkurantsi. Accordingly, there is more passion in his love songs and he experiences love more palpably than his talented predecessor, Kostandin Yerznkatsi. That love is homage to spontaneous and sublime human feelings, frank and explicit, without cover and allegory.

The foundation of lyrical inspiration in existence—love—is for him divine, since it was God himself who created Eve from Adam's rib, just for love.

You created woman from the rib,
For Adam to love,
Saying, grow and multiply
And roam the mounts and plains.⁸³

And, it was that same love that removed Adam from paradise. Therefore, Tlkurantsi concludes, love is divine in origin. Thus he seems to give himself the right to eulogize woman unrestrictedly. Showy nature, the sun and murmuring stream, birds and flowering rosebush complement and fulfill his romantic enjoyment.

Abeghian writes:

This worldliness already is not that which Kostandin Yerznkatsi had in his panegyric songs of spring and sun, light and love, where everything was a religious ecstasy in front of divine natural beauty and eternity. Here already the body rules with its dense, earthly, lustful demand; man has descended from celestial spheres to the real world and real enjoyment of life. While in that enjoyment the essential spot for our Tlkurantsi is not (occupied by) nature with its charms and mysterious forces, endowing man with a spiritual elegance, but man's body itself; for it, for that body, nature is only a beautiful recreational place, a green orchard, where it is possible to sit in the tree shade, draw enjoyment, make merry.⁸⁴

The core of the poet's feelings is woman who has become object of worship, with her beautiful body and look, the description of whose character derived still from ancient Armenian secular singers and Arab and oriental maudlin motifs. The description of woman's beauty already existed in Narekatsi's songs, in the figure of Mother of God, and in Yerznkatsi's love chansons. Yet with Tlkurantsi, in contrast to precursors, the right to love which, according to the bard, is the strongest of human feelings and most beautiful, is established unreservedly.

When man happens on love,
Then like a fire he burns,
No more he minds to pray,
Nor read scriptures and books.⁸⁵

Love is "holy," "immaculate," yet burns Tlkurantsi's heart like fire and turns him into a "chest of sins." This wonder-creature is endowed with ravishing colors and fragrances of nature ("Come, come, my lovely face").

Come, come my lovely face,
Glory to your maker,
You have come from Eden,
Blessed be your shaper.

Come, come sun of the spring,
Come autumnal moon bright,
Sit so I can watch you,
Enough for me your sight.

Your look cures the ailing,
Health for the feverish,
Your eyes sea for the dry,
Mouth sweet for the famished.

Your lap deathless eden,
Departed hearts returns,
Which won't die, nor grow old,
Nor pale their faces turn.⁸⁶

The woman described by Tlkurantsi is more decorous with her charm and burning passion than Yerznkatsi's "sprig." He engraves a figure where all the lines of woman's face and body become subject for comparison. Whereas the delicate associations of colors and fragrances animate that sparkling apparition in each single poetic line. Tlkurantsi's belle dame is vernal dew and sun; her face is "light," "cheeks tulip"; she is "lily and basil," "violet and nenuphar," "paradise with immortal fruit"; a creature whom "God and man" love. She is a picturesque image, whose power and charms priests, monastics, chaplains, and friars cannot resist, losing their "minds in their heads" and "shame from their faces."

The poetic descriptions, comparisons, and epithets, combined with overflowing emotion and passion, transmit such expressiveness to the lyric that they entirely animate the woman-being, created with shining beauty ("Springs are following other springs").

Springs are following other springs,
To each other they speak of love;
Eyes that are seas and lit up lyre,
Eye-brows that bend just like an arch.

Your forehead is light and it shines,
Like a full moon, *shams* and *ghamar*,*
Your tresses that are thread in gold,
Flow evenly down your shoulders.

Your face is brilliant in crimson,
Rose and basil and nunephar;
Bosom orchard full of roses,
And your teeth are arranged like pearls.

Your voice is a sweet melody,
Pouring from your mouth as jewel;
Your fingers are so luminous,
That the star of day shines no more.

You pierced me with such an arrow,

That I have nothing to heal by;
You countenance so beautiful,
As if created by hand-craft.

You are a blossomed almond tree,
Which produces musk and amber,
You dress in muslin and crimson,
With all your locks fixed in pearls.

Laden with goods from the cities
Cathay, Bursa, *Chin u Machin*,**
The trail that you have tread upon,
Sprouted lilies and nunephar.⁸⁷

(* Arabic, "sun and moon"; ** folkloric expression, "China")

In oriental (Arab, Persian) poetry, the celestial luminaries (sun, moon, stars) as well as the ornaments of nature (flowers, trees, fruits, birds) with their qualities (warm, bright, sparkling, colorful, and sweet) become comparative grades and expose woman's charms and beauty. Such arrangement of comparisons was characteristic also of Narekatsi and Yerznkatsi. The origin of this in Armenian literature came from *sharakans*, when the marks glorifying Mother of God were placed on secular woman. Woman became very desirable, because the secularizing outlook gave medieval man justification to encourage individual feelings. With Tlkurantsi, love is emotion turned into worship, devoid of lusty sentiment and even without reciprocal expectation:

Whether you love me or do not,
I still love you with all my heart.

Tlkurantsi is not after incorporeal intimacy or internal metier; woman's inner world, psychology do not occupy him. He is carried away by outer sparkle and charms and exclaims happily and delightedly:

Glory and hail to your parent,
Praise and thanks to your creator.

Tender and powerful woman-being has filled with fire and flame
the poet's soul who, like a madman, has turned into the slave and subject
of that beauty, forgotten everything in life ("I can no more resist your
love").

I can no more resist your love, please forgive me, for here I die,
Take a golden hatchet in hand, and come to put me in the grave.

Let them scorch me in burning stuff, so the flame of my heart
will shout,
Many a man fall in this fire, the dry aflame over the wet.

Let them bathe my body in wine, bring a minstrel as confessor,
Green leaves let them wrap around me, entomb me in the new
orchard.

Ignominious and murderer, the hangman comes to learn from
you,
Many you threw in love's dungeon, your dwellings is a
slaughterhouse.

My heart you burned and ground it down and used it as a
mascara,
Then you turned and emptied my blood to use for your feet as
hina.

Stone me unto death with apples, I was pierced through by
tender tongue,
You made me mad with sweetish wine, imprisoning in your
bosom.

Tonight when I was in dreaming, they cut me down from piece
to piece,
The savage beasts devoured my blood and the vultures ravaged
my corpse.

There is a lion's mouth at me, my blood is running like water,
Whoever is thirsty for it, can come and drink to be content.

Underfoot the braves turned to dust, I have one heart for
sacrifice,
My liver has been fried enough, suffer my blood turn into
wine.⁸⁸

Russian critic Valeri Bryusov writes the following about Tlkurantsi's poetry:

... Hovhannes is entirely an outburst, desire, fire. Hovhannes's song opens up such depths of emotion which became widely accessible for literature only in our century. It can be freely stated that, that Hovhannes known by few (...) has by much anticipated the entire lyricism contemporaneous to him by two or three centuries in the expression of his feelings. There are no such cries of real emotion in Petrarch's sonnets, a century before, nor in Ronsard's love songs, written, perhaps, a century later. Hovhannes's chanson (...) ends in conciliatory sentiment. Yet that is not what is significant; it is significant that the poet has discovered such confessions ("You burned my heart and ground it down ... " etc.), which became completely understandable only in our days, only after Alfred de Musset and Heine and Baudelaire made their revelations.⁸⁹

Tlkurantsi has also sung the beauty of nature, especially of spring, in optimistic and vivacious sentiment, co-placing it with his mistress's budding charm ("It is now spring bright").

Within the set of love and nature chansons, a special place is occupied by the poem titled "Tagh garnan" (Ode to Spring), which is among the best specimens of medieval Armenian literature—flowering and animate nature, opulence of colors, sunsearing summer, ripening, abundance, and then autumn, like "elderliness."

God unbegun and infinite,
Unborne and inexplicable,
Thou made the spring so exquisite,
Like the Edenic paradise.
Trees and gardens all have turned green,

Garmented in colorful fruits,
Fountains started overflowing,
And ran to the seas and rivers.
Four-legged creatures which were herded
In the stables came rushing out;
The earth boiled up and became soft,
Hosts and hosts of flowers sprouted,
All of the plains were full of them,
And from their fragrance men rejoice.
Lilies, green myrtle, licorice,
And violets got together,
And went to adore the rose ...

The boughs of the trees became young,
One after th' other fruits ripened;
The mulberry sweet as halva,
The cherry looked just like a bow;
Apricots turned golden on trees,
And the cheeks of apples turned red.
Although the fruits disdained the pear,
It arrived exactly on time.
The walnut, jujube, and chestnut,
The almond and acorn sweetened.
Pomegranate grew teeming teeth,
The date dangled from on the palm,
The quince took on a yellow hue,
The peach broke from its tie and fell.
Orange, bigarade, and lemon
Came to give their bounty to man.

Being the passing of all seeds,
The plains were emptied of all plants,
Flowers were gone and seen no more,
The trees were bared of all their fruits,
And the branches shed down their leaves.
The birds gather in flocks and cry,
What could be as good as the spring?
Even if they still eat and drink,

Behold, they still long for springtime;
Autumn is like elderliness,
The elderly die and are gone.
We should look for the unpassing,
Which forever is eternal,
And is like the spring every day,
Unassailed glory and praise.⁹⁰

In Tlkurantsi's lyricism, fondness for life is the most characteristic quality, which nonetheless collides with the bard's medieval mentality. The poet feels the same philosophical duality of his period—the contradiction between soul and body. And, however great the desire for beauty and satisfaction be, still, at the end of nearly all love poems Tlkurantsi attaches a quatrain, wherein he repents and considers himself sinful, for his emotions and desiderata. The contrast between secular and Christian makes itself felt and continues to exist but the sentiment of secularization essentially reconciles the two.

Mad Hovhannes Tlkurantsi,
Completely full of wretched sin,
Implores of you that in your hearts
Say Lord have mercy on his soul.⁹¹

The philosophical questions of life and death are plumbed in his admonitive and moralistic songs. Tlkurantsi is terrified of the realization of death and considers it the harshest thing in the world.

O death, when I remember you,
I tremble and am terrified.
There is nothing bitter as you,
You are harsher than the harshest.⁹²

Death shatters all beauty; it is most powerful and unsparing, while Tlkurantsi's fondness for life is everlasting, and he would have wanted to enjoy love and ecstasy forever. The transitoriness of life and the depressing awareness of sin upset his soul, so he feels sinful and crushed.

This attitude is pessimistic, the result of medieval mores and environment, yet it does not lead Tlkurantsi to the thought of vanity of life, as with Yerznkatsi. For him, the world is life itself; what saddens him is that life is ephemeral. As a man of the Middle Ages, Tlkurantsi could still not go far in his ideas and comprehensions. While he displays his secular fondness for life absolutely when singing woman and nature, in his admonitive lyrics, examining issues of faith, death, goodness, wickedness, judgment, he is a man of his times. Even after giving the most beautiful attributes about woman, in the poem "Tlkurantsi's Song on Wicked and Malignant Woman" he considers woman wicked, perjurer, and devil's friend; one, who defiled king David, despoiled Solomon, and beheaded Saint John. Indeed, Leo does not consider this song Tlkurantsi's, finding it incoherent with Tlkurantsi's gynolatry. In fact, such was the attitude of the time toward woman and not Tlkurantsi's. That is what they had in mind, when other medieval poets wrote songs on the same theme, too.

If today the woman repents,
 Tomorrow she is fiend and bad;
 Her eyes though weep, her heart is stained,
 God help from the ill of woman.

Woman could swear, and burst with oath,
 "Because of you I will be dead,"
 Do not trust that she is crying,
 God help from the ill of woman.

Woman who is tender and good,
 Is like unto holy virgins,
 But if wicked and unturning,
 She is a dwelling for demons.⁹³

In the Middle Ages, epic songs were composed about historic events, regarding some event or person. They are metrical poems, recited or sung verbally. Because they had not been written down, epic songs were forgotten or reached our days as prose stories and tales. Of these, *Narekatsi*, *Levoni yerge*, *Mokats Mirza*, *Karos khache*, and others are famous. In this regard, Tlkurantsi is the first and only author in the

Middle Ages who embellished and turned into verse the historical themes common in folklore about Grigor Narekatsi and noted Armenian General Liparit of Cilicia.

"Ode to Brave Liparit" (154 lines) is an epic work of lyric nature, narrating the 1369 attack of Turkic Manchuk Amira's large army on Sis, capital of Cilicia, and elevating General Liparit's courageous character with this historic event as background.

Tlkurantsi's songs, as well as "Ode to Brave Liparit" epic, are written utilizing conversational idiom and expressions. Imitating the metrical forms of folk songs, Tlkurantsi composed a large portion of his poems with iamb bi-metric eight-syllable lines, corresponding to their light secular spirit. He has chansons written in *hairen* meter. Such are the epic about Narekatsi (100 lines), borrowed from folklore, and "Commentary on Creatures" (1600 lines). His moralistic and epic poems are written in Middle Armenian, while the religious verse in *grabar*, making use of various rhyming meters. Many of Tlkurantsi's poems are monorhymed.

Du yes garnanayin vard u burastan,
Acherd e tzover, khumar u mestan,
Ko tzotst e derakht, mergats andastan,
Du indz datavor, ara datastan;
Sirov mi spananer, chellat efenti.

Siasat unis kan zoravor *khach*,
Hreghen yes, hogheghen, te mardadem *kaj*;
Hivand yem, voghchanam, yerb indz nestis *haj*;
E viz shoghktan, e aiter *kakach*,
Togh anpordz menas kan znshdar *kananch*;
Sirov mi spananer, chellat efenti.

Դու ես գարնանային վարդ ու բուրաստան,
Աչերտ է ծովեր, խումար ու մէստան,
Քո ծոցտ է դըրախտ, մըրդաց անդաստան,
Դու ինձ դատաւոր, արա՛ դատաստան.

Սիրով մի՛ սպանաներ, ճէլլատ էֆէնտի:

Սիասաթ ունիս քան զօրաւոր խաչ,

Հրեղէ՞ն ես, հողեղէ՞ն, թէ մարդադէմ քաջ.
 Հիւանդ եմ՝ ողջանամ, երբ ինձ նըստիս յաջ.
 է՛ վիզ շողկտան, է՛ այտեր կակաչ,
 Թող անփորձ մընաս քան զնշդար կանանչ.
 Սիրով մի՛ սպանաներ, ճէլլատ էֆէնտի: ⁹⁴

Or:

Ku tandzrana shukn tzarin,
 Hordor gna jurn i harvin;
 Zteven berer bolor vezin,
 Sirov khemer zanush ginin.

Կու թանճրանայ շուքն ծառին,
 Յորդոր գնայ ջուրն ի յառվին.
 Զթեւըն բերէր բոլոր վըզին,
 Սիրով խըմէր զանուշ գինին: ⁹⁵

Often, the second and fourth lines are rhymed, while the first and third lines are left free.

Achern e tzov, unkn tukh amp,
 Mazn e deghdzan voski telen,
 Inken chochar zet zuri chegh,
 Herov airer zerkir amen.

Աչերն է ծով, ունքն թուխ ամպ,
 Մազն է դեղձան ոսկի թելէն,
 Ինքըն ճոճար զէտ զուռի ճեղ,
 Հըրով այրէր զերկիր ամէն: ⁹⁶

It also occurs that the first and second, third and fourth lines have the same rhyme.

Acher usik zet eztzover,
 Uner unik kan ztukh amper;
 Shoghair klapn u lar shrtUNK
 U margarteshar atamUNK.

Աչեր ուսիք զէտ ըզծովեր,
 Ուներ ունիք քան զթուխ ամպեր.
 Շողայր կլափն ու լար շրթո՞րհնք
 Ու մարգարտէշար ատամ Ո՞րհնք:⁹⁷

And sometimes, the first and third, second and fourth lines of the poem have similar rhymes.

Yereset var e tzirani,
 Vard, erehan u nunuFAR;
 Tzotst e baghcha vardov i li,
 Margarit atmunkt shareshAR.

Երեսըտ վառ է ծիրանի,
 Վարդ, ըռէհան ու նունուՖԱՐ.
 Ծոցտ է բաղչայ վարդով ի լի,
 Մարգարիտ ատմունքտ շարէշԱՐ:⁹⁸

Te vardapetn zdzez tesnu,
 Morna zusumn u shat grUNK;
 Amen andzambn i dogh yelnu,
 Antsene zamaren dzmerUNK.

Թէ վարդապետն զձեզ տեսնու,
 Մռնայ գոլսումն ու շատ գրՈ՞րհնք.
 Ամէն անձամբն ի դող ելնու,
 Անցընէ զամառըն ձմերՈ՞րհնք:⁹⁹

Beside the above-cited techniques, Tlkurantsi used others, too (when the first, second and third lines are monorhymed, while the fourth different, or the second, third, and fourth lines are monorhymed, whereas the first different, etc.). In the same poem often various rhyming schemes are utilized without harming metrical resonance of the song. Tlkurantsi also used refrains in the fourth or fifth line of the poem.

Aesthetically, Tlkurantsi's creation is expressive and euphonic, bears the imprint of popular thinking deeper in comparison with his antecedents and, in this sense, is more secular and vivacious. Perhaps this is the reason why Tlkurantsi is the first medieval bard whose sixteen

poems (two religious, the rest secular) were included in the original *Tagharan* (Songbook), printed in 1513.

Mkrtich Naghash

Poet and painter Mkrtich Naghash is a unique figure of fifteenth-century Armenian verse and culture.¹⁰⁰

He was born in the village Por of Baghesh province, between 1390-1395. He received training in the Metzop monastery, studying under Tovma Metzopetsi, was an erudite theologian, read Armenian and Greek philosophy, history, and literature and greatly appreciated Arsitotle, considering him "fount of wisdom."

Mkrtich Naghash's biography ("Historiographic Colophon on These Books ...") was written by Astvatzatur vardapet, while he was still alive, bringing the story of his life up to 1449. Naghash was also a famous painter and scribe for which, too, he received his *Naghash* appellation. With his only son, Mesrop, he moved to the Mesopotamian city of Amid in 1420, and in 1430 he was ordained bishop by Catholicos Kostandin VI Vahkatsi of Sis, taking charge of the spiritual leader's office for Mesopotamia Armenians. Through his substantive sermons and counsel, eager and wise actions, Naghash soon gained public recognition not only among Armenians but also foreigners, the Persian court, sultan of Egypt, pope of Rome, and circles of ruling Muslim superiors, and *begs*. As with Christians, he won the sympathy of heterodox peoples, too, and during those turbulent political times he helped free Armenian serfs from bondage under Muslim dominion and obtained certain national liberties in Amid to construct and renovate Armenian churches and buildings. However, the opportunities granted the Christians angered Muslim clerics who, in 1443, destroyed the dome of St. Thadeus cathedral in Amid renovated by Naghash, for being higher than the city minarets. Hurt and vexed, Naghash departed Amid for Constantinople and Crimea, dabbling in miniature painting. In 1449 he returned to the fatherland and continued his national-literary activity. Naghash died circa 1475, a victim of the plague.

Naghash's self-denying national and religious activity influenced his literary character, moving him not with personal or lyrical delicate sentiments but universal concerns. Sixteen of his songs have

reached us, four of which were placed in the first songbook printed in Venice in 1513, while the rest were published in the nineteenth century among various literary-scholarly sources.

As a poet, Naghash was effected by Narekatsi and especially Kostandin Yerznkatsi and Frik. He wrote poems regarding nature and love, rose and nightingale, three in number ("Song for Prophets and Christ and the Illuminator," "Song of Wedding and Human Happiness," "Song on Blbul and Rose"). Nevertheless, the characteristic and essential in his labors were reflective-admonitive verses. And, while those lyrics are based on Christian ideas, they are unique, individualized by intimate spirit.

Naghash's national and human sentiments do not express passion and outburst, pained by the heavy Muslim yoke. He is restrained, balanced, and with sincere devotion tries to help men and direct them to the good and noble, to harmony and patriotism. His pen possesses neither the medieval bards' brilliant colors, bubbling feelings, nor their expressive art. Yet, Naghash enamors through his sorrowful tenderness; he neither complains of his times nor orders around but rather impresses with his subservient sadness.

Naghash is inclined to explain the disharmonious life—the reality full of evil—by man's imperfectness, the existence of his numerous blemishes, chief of which he considers greed. It is the criticism of this pervasive flaw that concerns Naghash's poem "Vasn agahutian" (On Greed), where the font of wickedness and hypocrisy, wars and devastations is considered greed.

This world is a house full of wealth, opulence, and abundance;
It is a table plentiful, which everybody would desire.
Those who are wise in devotion, take in moderation and leave;
They do enjoy it peacefully and with safety reach their haven.

Yet while those that are mindless, in their wicked avarice go
blind,
Jump into the bosom of the transitory and float on waves.
From the very start to the end whatever evil that was done,
Avariciousness was the cause; so they were deprived from the
good.¹⁰¹

Naghash remarks critically on spiritual and secular figures and classes carrying that huge human defect in the past and in his days. It was the passion of greed that deprived the first man, Adam, from paradise; it was the same evil that led Judas to betrayal, and kings to war, made the spiritual rank (from Catholicos to friar) to become corrupt and lawless.

Those that fight and are afflicted, those that are jealous and
thieving,

And those who think evil of men—all these are due to avarice;
Those that impose and are stealing, giving false oath and
betraying,

Thousands who lost their devotion—all these are due to avarice.
I saw some in the dark dungeon, and hosts of others on gallows,
Some, who perished altogether—all these are due to avarice.
Whatever kings and great princes, who rode on each other to
fight,

Whatever blood they spilled on earth—all these are due to
avarice;

Whatever city was destroyed and peoples who were taken slave,
Whatever was ruined and spoiled—all these are due to
avarice.¹⁰²

The poem "On Greed" is written with a disturbed soul and sincere sentiment, opening the thwarted mores of bleak reality in his period. The poet has a high regard for man and, wishing to see him perfect, he convinces and advises not to be spiteful and vindictive, jealous and grandiose. He finds that even having Aristotle's wisdom is worthless and keeping divine laws useless, if "your heart is impure with envy" or full of vengeance and mutinous ("Counsel on Not Staying Vexed and Holding Spite").

Naghash profoundly experienced the hard condition of the expatriate far from the homeland and established the expatriation theme for the first time in Armenian literature. The extensive political persecutions by Turks and Persians in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries dislocated the Armenian people which, leaving behind its native land, went to distant countries. The massive emigrations, which depopulated the land, have been viewed as universal evil and misfortune

since the eleventh century and were reflected in literature and folk songs.

In the three expatriation songs ("Dear, do not say exile," "Eternal glory to God, lover of man" and "When the exile decided to go") that have reached us, Naghash describes with grief and pity the state of the exile on foreign lands where there are "no brother, no beloved, no kinsmen."

But the exile's life is sorrowful and tragic,
Harsh and bitter, full of sadness in the dungeon;
Whenever he is wandering in foreign lands,
Aliens do not recognize or know the exile.

There is no brother, no beloved, no kinsmen;
No one can he find caring and hospitable;
Even if he were a nobleman and matchless,
Erroneously they would still call him indecent.

The bread that the exile wants to eat is pungent,
Harsh and bitter, mixed with tears the water he drinks;
If they fed him almond and candy all day long,
He will be dripping blood from his heart as he sighs.¹⁰³

It is mourning in the heart of the exile who has lost native land and kin; he burns from longing and suffers in alienation, surrounded by indifferent men. Naghash paints with experienced and heart-felt emotion the expatriate's misery and death—the alien, unsympathetic environment, the bleak and shocking image of the exile's existence. The decription of his death is tragic—the ailing exile is alone, far from his loved ones, fallen to the ground "ash-covered" on an alien street.

There was no pillow for the exile, nor a bed;
The stones were his mattress, and the dust was his bunk.

Lo, how bitter the death or life of the exile;
There was no one to cross his hands over his heart;
They pushed him to the edge of the earth in laughter;
Nobody came to the burial of the exile.¹⁰⁴

As consolation, the balladeer reminds of the transitoriness of life, considering the hope for the eternal most important:

All of us are exiles, brothers, nobody has a fatherland;
Equally we are going, for the other life is our homeland.

Naghash's world view holds on the idea of the vanity of life and the consolation of the eternal. From the same viewpoint, too, he dictates his counsels, maligning the faults and hypocrisy of men.

Likewise, in his reflective-philosophical poems ("Admonitive Dicta Spoken by Mkrtich Naghash Vardapet"), Naghash incessantly reminds man to realize his temporal calling in the world, exhorts and counsels him to be moderate, and not desire wealth and glory but rather become wise in faith and good deeds, since

Greatness and glory of this world will pass away,
The fabric of this temple ruined and pulled down;

But know you this, as to what is it that you judge,
When you have left others and have entered the earth.

Know this, know this: there is a day of death for you;
Build a tomb as a dwelling for you to stay in.¹⁰⁵

Nevertheless, however much temporary and vain life is, Naghash does not reject the world. He feels the fear of death and the grief of leaving the world and life. From this perspective his poem, "Elegy on the Dead," written in 1469 on the occasion of the plague epidemic in the city of Mertin to which the author himself was witness, is characteristic.

The poet decries untimely death when it severs a young budding life and leaves the desires and realizations of his heart unfulfilled. The child lying on his deathbed implores plaintively to his father to save him, while the father is unable to assist him and change his son's fate. The poem "Elegy on the Dead" is a heartrending tragic picture, written in tearful emotion and for this reason, too, was sung during funerals of the young dead.

Naghash's creation is humanistic in content and aims to comfort and console men. He wrote in folk idiom, Middle Armenian, making use of dialects and *grabar* forms. While it was customary to compose religious poems uniformly, Naghash utilized the medieval *hairen* meter and wrote in fifteen-syllable lines or sixteen-syllable meters which are easily staved, preserving the rhythm. While Naghash's verses are not brilliant in the sense of poetic artistry, they are real, possess internal affecting energy which is the advantage of content and idea, rather than form.

During different phases of his activity Naghash also periodically reproduced and variegated manuscripts, attaching valuable colophons to them which have been included in the first volume of Levon Khachikian's work, *XV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner* (Colophons of Fifteenth Century Armenian Manuscripts), Yerevan, 1955.

Grigoris Aghtamartsi

Armenian verse experienced further development in the sixteenth century. The sensibility and interpretation of romantic lyricism brought by Tlkurantsi was continued by his follower, Grigoris Aghtamartsi, whose songs are of the perfect creations in Armenian literature. The elegance of structure, figures, opulence of ostentatious oriental description, analogies, and poetic artistry are so expressive and emotive, that even today they are read with the greatest enjoyment.¹⁰⁶

Unlike preceding authors, considerable information is preserved regarding Aghtamartsi's life and work, mainly in his own creations and the colophon of one Psalm-book commissioned by him, scribed by Margare Archishetsi.¹⁰⁷ It is known from these sources that he descended from the Artzruni royal house of Vaspurakan and is the first in time (c. 1470-c. 1550) of three Grigoris Aghtamartsi Catholicoi in the sixteenth century. Aghtamartsi was god-son to the Archesh Monastery's acclaimed abbot Grigor Rabuni, to whom he also dedicated a series of poems. It is known that from 1512-1544 he was Catholicos of Aghtamar, on one of the Lake Van islands, where king Gagik had constructed S. Khach church in the ninth century, which was turned into a pontifical seat after 1113.

In addition to spiritual-religious duties, Aghtamartsi was also occupied by scribing and literature and, generally, was a talented personality. Beside poetic skills, he had versatility in painting—a circumstance not unique in medieval reality (Khatchatur Kecharetsi, Aghtamartsi himself, Zakaria Gnunetsi [Gnuniants], Mkrtich Naghash, Naghash Hovnatan). He copied and variegated manuscripts, missals; corrected and rectified copies of the *Alexander Romance* reproduced in 1525, 1526, and 1536; and, styled them with illustrations.

The years of Aghtamartsi's activity were stormy and uncomfortable times in Armenia. Vaspurakan had become a bone of contention during the reigns of Shah Ismayel and Shah Tahmasp. Slavery, overtaxation, and devastations accompanied the Christian Armenian people everywhere, concerning which Aghtamartsi wrote in a poem (1523):

The Muslims with decrees wretched,
Roast my nation as in a blaze.

Unsafe circumstances and incessantly repeated plunders turned Aghtamartsi into a wanderer, seen in Archesh, Metzop, Varag, Urnkar, and elsewhere, with his associate and fellow scribe Margare Archishetsi. He passed from city to city, village to village, through burned and destroyed habitats; he helped and consoled his own and prayed for them. During these prolonged peregrinations he listened to the dervishes' and bards' Persian, Turkish, and Armenian chansons and recitals, doleful folk songs and was intoxicated by them. Under the influences and impressions he sustained, Aghtamartsi composed pious and gainful chansons, love songs, and *kafas*.

As a medieval thinker, Aghtamartsi had a similar world view and ideas as his antecedents—vanity of the world, awareness of sin, and terror of death. Expressions of such sentiments are his "Alas and a Thousand Woes," "Body Deprives Soul," hagiographical poems "Verse by Grigoris Aghtamartsi on Anchorite Marinos's Life," and "Ode to Astvatzatur Khatayetsi."

The religious outlook in these songs no more retains those hopeless and elegiac nuances tormenting Narekatsi or others. He is not subdued in spirit. "... The optimism," writes Avdalbegian, "even if

springing from religious faith or a result of the influence of psalms, differentiates him palpably from our other bards."¹⁰⁸

Aghtamartsi also wrote religious songs dedicated to Mary and Jesus: "Praise of Sancta Dei Mater" ("The King's covered garden ..."), a poem of thirty-six quatrains in the succession of the Armenian alphabet and "Ode to Sancta Dei Mater" ("Temple immaterial, munificent of logos ..."), also written in alphabetic order and constituting ten quatrains; the song titled "Ark Made Incorruptible," fashioned in twelve quatrains, where the capitals of the first lines in each quatrain articulate the words "by father Grigoris" ("Ter Grigorise" in Armenian) and the song beginning "Moon full of sunlit beauty," which has titles in certain manuscripts implying the poem is dedicated to Mary ("Eulogy to Sancta Dei Mater," "Ode on Sancta Dei Mater"). The song "Sun of Justice" consecrated to Christ is the versified phrasing of the *Gospel of John*, the story of Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection. These are songs written in the traditional forms of religious poetry; they possess richness of vocabulary, are notable for opulence of analogies, yet are inanimate; they sparkle as beautiful images, yet do not awaken any feeling or sentiment. Only the first song is sufficiently impressive in a sense of poetic artistry and expresses individual distinct emotions.

Thou are sunlit gentle cloud,
That showers rain on the earth,
Giving us many presents,
 Temple of light holy mother virgin.

Thou are altar luminous,
Gold thurible of incense,
Palate of our devotion,
 Temple of light holy mother virgin.

The fragrance of thine flowers,
Take their colors from the suns;
Please render me translucent,
 Temple of light holy mother virgin.

Speak to me, o desireful,
Mine body languishing pines,

Thirsty is mine heart for love,
 Temple of light holy mother virgin.¹⁰⁹

Beside religious songs, Aghtamartsi has poems composed in identical wondrous sentiment, unnominated, thus difficult to assume who the venerated personage is. And this itself caused critics and readers to interpret those abstract songs as they preferred themselves. In scholars' opinion, the abstractness of Aghtamartsi's chansons, often also the allegory, contributed to those songs carrying other implications than a religious subtext—characteristic human feelings directed at one he is enraptured with, be it the hermit Antony of Thebes, his teacher Grigor Rabuni, or Jesus Christ. It is suggested that Aghtamartsi dedicated the songs "Let me praise thee pure angel," "Thou are from paradise of Aden," "Thou garden of Eden," "In angelic pure image," "Thou are sun, moon at fullness," and "Image Godlike composed" to the model man, whom he considered Christ to be and decorated him with expressive attributes of faith and pioussness.¹¹⁰

Highest of the high and gift to the world,
 Wise and provident and matchless human.

Or:

Strong-armed as the lion of the jungle,
 Thou are the king of all the animals,
 When thou cry out in thine voice terrible,
 All of the elements in fear tremble ...¹¹¹

Here we have chaste tribulations, admiration, longing, and love. And it is not surprising that these types of Aghtamartsi's songs would have been conceived as love poems. The absence of determinateness provides the possibility for these to be comprehended either as sentiments inspired by faith, eulogies venerating friend or intimate, or to be viewed as love-sick chansons. In Armenian literature Aghtamartsi's songs have been admitted in this third sense, while their author has been acclaimed as a vivacious love-singer, amorous of beauty and enjoyment.

The colors of nature, the spirit of life and love are expressed with such force in his work, that willingly or not, he becomes a singer of

secular sentiments. Love is described as "goblet of delight," and he intends to be drunk by it. Whereas, the panegyricized being is pretty as a peacock, like a marvelous image dabbled in luxurious colors.

Pillar of my heart and my happiness,
My breath and my soul and my liveliness;
You are on my mind awake or asleep;
May it bleed the heart of your enemy.

Shrub of almond and new-budding flower,
Your face is as bright as the rose petal;
It is a houri and peri fragrant;
Your one look is worth Khorasan and Hind.

Your lips are candy, your talk so sweet is;
The tongue in your mouth priceless jewel is:
The scent of campion flower blows from you;
But it's not like yours, for yours richer is.¹¹²

"Lo, our vineyards have flowered up," "At spring blbul in the vineyard," "After the rose had gone," "In the spring the rose has come to the orchard," and "The flowers say, It is enough," dedicated to spring, or rose and nightingale, are allegorical poems, where allegory is rather form than hidden subtext. Allegory was a common medium in medieval literature; however, while other bards revealed the spiritual or secular intent of the work, Aghtamartsi does not and seemingly would not wish to expose the object of his inspiration and wonder; he leaves freedom to interpret the inner source of stimulation to the reader.

Aghtmaratsi's lyricism is a panegyric to man's perfection—his unspoiled and alluring portrait, coupled with inspiring images of vernal flowers. Those pure and attractive sentiments are equally desirable not only to the austere cleric seeking spiritual nourishment and consolation but also to the ordinary secular individual, providing satiation to his wordly imagination.

The store of sensations caused by enrapture in nature creates a mood that captivates the reader and carries him along. The poem "In spring the rose has come to the orchard" expresses such eager and animated delight, where the beauty of nature and the enchantment of

love have melded to each other, through interweaving of numerous overflowing analogies and brisk adjectives.

In spring the rose has come to the orchard;
The bulbul and turtle-dove sing sweetly;
They have fallen in love with the red bush
Attired in verdant and in crimson leaves.

Drunk am I, intoxicated with love,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the day time with sun,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the night time with dreams.

Campion flower that never wilts away,
Prompt sage who is healer to every one,
May you remain verdant like a horn beam;
Make us worthy of always seeing you.

Drunk am I, intoxicated with love,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the day time with sun,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the night time with dreams.

Sweet tasting dish and delightful goblet,
End to end candy, like a date-palm tree,
A brilliant image like a rose petal,
Please render us now worthy of your love.

Drunk am I, intoxicated with love,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the day time with sun,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the night time with dreams.

A beautiful sight and glorious figure,
Light shines from you as if from an angel,
Your mouth an altar and box of incense,
Your white teeth are like a row of jewels.

Drunk am I, intoxicated with love,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the day time with sun,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the night time with dreams.¹¹³

The effective and notable poetic images and tender human emotions are grasped as full-blown love toward man and life, even if not

actually experienced as with his antecedent, Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, but at least searching and dreamy.

The poet has received creative charge from the psalms, those ancient religious eulogies where man, existence, and nature were affirmed through praise of creation. *Song of Songs* was also a subject for copying; its ancient biblical themes becoming an inspirational source and acquiring new and impressive tenor. Aghtamartsi's "Lo, our vineyards have flowered up" song was later even called "The writ of song of songs by Grigor Catholicos." This already is a secular praise of love, with such joyful brightness and charm, that it seems the bard sculpts his belle dame so he can burn by the enticement of her matchless beauty.

Lo, our vineyards have flowered up,
Smelling of immortality;
Come, covetous and matchless mine,
In the orchard let's make merry.

Let milk and wine pour from your breasts;
It's honey that drips from your lips,
Of which my heart strongly desires
And in pining extremely thirsts.

Charming in shape, sweet in discourse,
Your love has an untold secret;
You, intelligible bright sun,
Please enlighten my mind darkened.

When concealed to my eyes of flesh,
You appear to the eyes of mind;
You dwell firmly within my heart,
I have you wrapped within my soul.¹¹⁴

Aghtamartsi's fondness for the woman he loves is tender; she is an immaculate lyrical image, towards whom the poet's ardor is delicate and gentle, although the desire to attain her is strong and fervent.

Your eyebrows are like an unsheathed sword;

Your eyelashes are drawn out as lances;
 You kill, enslave a thousand times a day,
 What a lovely face, a real hyacinth.

With love you devoured and pierced through my heart;
 I burn and I scorch as in a furnace;
 Fire and flame pour from my heart without end;
 Show me that divine countenance of yours.

Your waist is slender as pliant willow,
 While your white teeth are a row of pearls,
 Lovely to look at and like fruit of life;
 Say a few things with that sweet tongue of yours.¹¹⁵

The changing of times and mellowed medieval religious mentality needed sentiment and emotions, colors and motion in life. And Aghtamartsi's chansons were replete with all these. And even when the author mentioned who it was addressed to at the end of the poem, all the same, the reader was to look for his own experience and desires in there. Besides, Aghtamartsi's individual feelings, by virtue of his ability to generalize, readily converted from the personal to the communal, to the universal—a quality, by which all his works are characterized.

The praise of love and spring is also expressed in the three chansons about the eternal love of the rose and nightingale—"The flowers say, It is enough," "After the rose had gone," and "At spring blbul in the vineyard," which are titled "Love Chanson" in songbooks. Aside from the idea of unbetraying love, various subtexts, religious allegory, longing for fatherland, or national-political ideas have been ascribed to these chansons of Aghtamartsi in Armenian philology.

In Armenian literature, Kostandin Yerznkatsi, Kecharetsi, Baghishetsi, Mkrtich Naghash, Khachatur Kharberdatsi, and others have reflected upon this oriental allegory, yet, Aghtamartsi's romance is charming by its structure and literary perfection.

The first of the chansons, titled "The flowers say, It is enough," was written in 1523 on the request of Metzop Monastery abbot Astvatzatur Metzopetsi. In the oldest manuscript, the poem is titled "Song of the Rose and Blbul Recited by Grigoris Catholicos Aghtamartsi," while in subsequent manuscripts and songbooks it has

various captions.¹¹⁶ It has 38 quatrains, and the last letter of the last line of each quatrain, taken together, articulate the Armenian alphabet.

In the Middle Ages, the personification of the rose and nightingale was presented as Christ and Mother of God, Gabriel and Mary, spirit and body.¹¹⁷ In this respect, critics have encountered considerable difficulty guessing at the subtext of Aghtamartsi's poem about the rose and nightingale; and, consequently, several opinions have been voiced. Some have considered this oriental allegory personification of the idea of love and "unadulterated loyalty" (Kostaniants), allegory of the struggle between soul and body (Akinian),¹¹⁸ the relationship between author and fatherland, where Nightingale is Aghtamartsi, while Rose is the fatherland (Kostaniants,¹¹⁹ Avdalbegian¹²⁰). One thing is probable—that abbot Metzopetsi would not ask a secular love song of Catholicos Aghtamartsi. It had to be either of religious content or patriotic. Perhaps Aghtamartsi had one of these in mind as subtext, yet, with either, the chanson is hazy and does not communicate a clear implication. It remains to suppose that the reader saw his desired idea in it, especially since the poem as an objective relationship between rose and nightingale, personifies admiration, love, and beauty between the two. And the verse has been grasped thus for centuries and included in songbooks. The allegory within the essence of the song has remained hidden, while the obvious is conceived as the love of nightingale towards the rose.

How long should I be suffering?
My heart for love has been frying,
I pine away due to the rose,
Without her my lot is morose.

Would I sit under the rose-bush,
And take the green leaves for my roof;
There is a fire within my heart,
Would I fly and arrive in swift.

Would I stare at you fixedly,
To dissipate all misery,
Charm of the garden and beauty;
All and every man longs for thee.¹²¹

The poem "The flowers say, It is enough" is written with folkloric spirit and bardic artistry, utilizing numerous Persian words. In Avdalbegian's opinion, the verse should be considered a secular chanson, since Aghtamartsi's religious songs are more canonical, have *grabar* vocabulary, and the subject is clear; while his poems of social and personal nature have allegorical character and from a compositional viewpoint, approach folkloric free metrical forms ("The flowers say, It is enough" is written in interchanging rhymes and simple iambic order).¹²²

Within the series of poems about the rose and nightingale, the most cherished and popular is considered to be the long chanson beginning with the line "After the rose had gone," consisting of thirty-four quatrains.

The love-scorched nightingale cannot find the rose in the autumnal leafless vineyard and anxiously queries the vineyard about his "precious" rose; the vineyard does not know where the "sultan" of flowers is. The irate nightingale curses it.

May your strong walls come down, you become ruin;
May all the boughs and leaves of your tall trees dry;
May all the feet trample upon you freely;
May all plant and legume in green be torn up.

Overflowing springs, hence do not go forward;
Trees, now shake away those verdant leaves of yours;
I speak simple and clear, I say without shame,
For my beloved has been taken from me.¹²³

The nightingale wails his beloved's loss in dismay, asks the gardener, flowers, and birds; but, no one knows about the rose. Life loses its meaning for him. On the advice of the gardener, the nightingale writes to the rose and implores her for a rendezvous, since he loves her with all his being.

For deprived of your sight, tremulous am I;
At night sleep comes not, and wide awake stay I;
When it is spring, depressed, into tears break I;
Because of your longing, worn and pined am I.¹²⁴

The rose responds that she will come to meet him in the garden at the flowering of spring. So the gratified and happy nightingale awaits that blessed day. The continuation of this first poem is the chanson "At spring . . ." where the coming of spring and blossomed vineyard are described. The bewildered nightingale is extremely pleased; he has seen the green rose bush and the rose sleeping inside the bud. In his joy he calls on the turtle-dove; together they pitch a tent in the vineyard, to closely watch the opening of the rose. He sings love for the rose night and day, intoxicated by her fragrance.

Your love strong and unbearable,
How else would this weak bird take it?
My heart burns in a raging fire,
If you do not respond to me.¹²⁵

In "The flowers say, It is enough," the flowers, full of envy, ask the nightingale out of the vineyard, but he continues his eulogy.

The bulbul says, a joke am I;
All of the birds make fun of me;
The rose does not inquire within;
Tears have sprung forth out of my eyes.¹²⁶

The rose reddens steadily, enchanted by the nightingale song, while the latter is drunk by her immortal perfume.

The bulbul wakes up at mid-night,
While the rose blooms in the morning;
The dew descends upon the bush,
The beauty of the rose brightens.¹²⁷

The nightingale enters the tent of the rose and asks her for a kiss, continues to serenade and convince the rose; but, she remains impregnable. The tender lyricism of the boema, its lively charge, the sincerity and depth of emotion infuse a romantic hue to this charming creation of Aghtamartsi. The figures are individualized—the nightingale, rose, gardener, and flowers animated. The rose and

nightingale romance, depicted in the colorful vineyard of Edenic paradise, is imbued with human touching sentiments and urgency of passion, making it effective as an eternal philosophy of the enchantment of love.

The intimate reading of Aghtamartsi's poems about the rose and nightingale draws the conclusion that he wrote love songs, especially since he closed them with such lines that betray the secular inclinations of the Catholicos-poet.

Slave Grigor unmentionable
And good-for-naught Aghtamartsi;
Love of the world a two-edged sword,
My heart is wounded through of it ...¹²⁸

Foolish Aghtamartsi, gather in your brains,
For the love of this world is the same as dust;
This glory and joys are but temporary;
There is a price to life, for it is a dream.¹²⁹

Yet simultaneously, certain images and thoughts expressed in the afore-mentioned poems, even the closings, are possible to interpret in a religious sense, as spiritual allegory.

As an acknowledged technique, as a poetic skill in literature, the allegory transmitted an interesting and non-ordinary quality to the work, while at times camouflaging the intent. In religious songs, particularly, it had wide-spread use. The characterizations of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, and of the apostolic figures of saints and prophets, injected invigoration to religious songs, which often are images of symbols hard to comprehend. In this respect, whatever meaning Aghtamartsi invested, his rose and nightingale chansons, having been written in the era following secularization, have been grasped as praise and veneration of human feelings. And, independent of what idea and religious cover the allegory is presented under, in the end, it sounds as eulogy for sensations of secular love.

A unique place in Aghtamartsi's literary legacy is occupied by the chanson "Every morning and at light," which has numerous variants. The subject of the poem is from the Bible and treats an important issue of the Middle Ages, the struggle of soul and body.¹³⁰ Aghtamartsi has

expressed the opposition of the human soul to death, in a curious poetic device; every morning the angel Gabriel's order is heard from the vineyard, to leave the garden and come out.

Every morning and at light
Gabriel said to my soul:
"Come, get out of this garden!"
My newly planted garden.¹³¹

The flowered garden, symbol of life, is full of the gifts of nature, the wonders of man's creative hands. How could man quietly leave the garden, that is life, when he has built a home and fountain in the world, drawn wine and planted roses? He wants to enjoy the fragrance of flowers and life.

Stones heaved I from the rivers;
Bush brought I from the mountains;
Fence made I for my garden;
They say, "Come, leave the garden!"

I will not leave this garden—
My newly planted garden,
This joyous place of mine,
And this new-built home of mine.

Fount I built in my garden;
Dew of heaven in the fount;
Sweet and tasty my waters;
All around plants and flowers.

Life and light I have not seen;
They say, "Come, leave the garden!"
How can I leave my garden—
This newly built home of mine?

I planted in my garden
The white and the crimson rose,
Branch of vine, green with foliage.

I sit pat in my garden.

I did not yet eat the fruit;
They say, "Come, leave the garden!"
How can I leave my garden—
This newly built home of mine?

The dove sits in my garden;
Spring has come to my flowers;
Bulbul has come to my rose;
Would that I see life and light.¹³²

Man's existence is short-lived, while the threat of an inevitable death is constant; yet, life is perpetual in its wonders and tragedy and is endlessly repeated.

Flowers have left my garden;
The rose dropped in my garden;
The fence fell from my garden,
Now that I left my garden.

Bulbul sings in my garden
From the morn until the night;
Dew comes down in my garden
Every morning and at night.¹³³

In charming logical associations, the facts of man's attachment to life are viewed from several aspects. In painterly skill Aghtamartsi arranges all that the individual achieves in life—a life, for which the poet's love is boundless, while his imaginings of death and the after-world are gloomy and dreadful. The fifty-six line poem "Every morning and at light" is a simple, yet simultaneously profound generalization of the ruminations on life and death, feelings and disillusion, which this clergyman of the late Middle Ages within Armenian reality experienced.

Aghtamartsi's religious poems are written in *grabar*, while his songs of nature and romances are in Middle Armenian, mixed with *grabar* phraseology. During the fifteenth century, the art of bardic polyglot chansons was favored by people and sounded heartfelt to the

audience. Conflation of the Persian, Arabic, and Turkish languages with Armenian was an accepted technique which was, in the same instance, an attempt to resemble oriental and, particularly, Persian poetry.

The abundant use of Persian and Turkish words, which at times make up whole quatrains, is noticeable with Aghtamartsi, too. Not only the utilized foreign vocabulary but also the literary techniques of Aghtamartsi's poetry, the mannerism of thought, the mysterious, allegorical garb of the works, and the various descriptive forms have been attributed by critics to the basis of influence from Persian literature. Without misgivings, it is possible to say that Aghtamartsi bore the profound impression of Persian lyricism. As Akinian writes in his study, he emanates the artistry of Aghtamartsi's poetry from Persian literature:

This sudden leap, which is notable between him and previous poets, is undoubtedly the result of this familiarity with Persian poetry. Grigoris refined his taste, enlarged the arena of his mind, polished his pen through acquaintance with modern Persian literature. And thus under Persian influence, it can be said, he opened a new school on native soil. Especially the allegoric character of his poems, his mystic diction, is a result of Persian influence; he constructed the masterpiece of his imagination with it, where souls extend by the seductive charm of pictorial description, where not only super-sensual ideas are presented with synonymous articles according to the essence and nature of the object but even theological doctrines are clothed in pretty intelligent images.¹³⁴

The author of the book *Armeno-Iranian Literary Relations*, Babken Chugaszian, does not deny that Persian versifying art was a poetic learning ground for Aghtamartsi; however, explaining the energy and mastery of his talent by that influence he considers extremism.¹³⁵

Aghtamartsi was an oriental. The literary techniques he was conversant in were oriental in general. In that era, minstrel, migratory, as well as folk songs were wide-spread among the masses. Of course, Aghtamartsi was familiar with the art of those songs, as well as Armenian and Persian famous poets. It was then by dint of his versifying talents and appreciation that he would select, purify, and depict that

imaginary world pulsating with supersensitive transitions and overflowing sentiments of nature and human soul which, at this point, belonged only to him and Armenian literature. The similarities of style, thoughts, descriptions confirm one thing—that individualized style and distinct literary directions are absent in medieval oriental art. It is due to this, that literary forms and conceptions are similar in the arts of different peoples. And because of this, Arabic, Persian, and Armenian love songs of the same period resemble each other in poetic norms as well as content.

Aghtamartsi has five poems written in lines mixed with Persian and Turkish: “After the rose had gone . . .,” “The flowers say . . .,” “In pure image . . .,” “You are the sun . . .,” and “You Eden paradise. . . .” These are favorite chansons, which were printed in the first Armenian song-books and periodical press and duplicated numerous times, and distorted.¹³⁶ Utilized in those songs are foreign words, expressions, and borrowed phrases encountered among peoples of the Near East of the same era. It is assumed that Aghtamartsi was acquainted with the fifteenth-century Persian poet Bedieddin Tavrizi’s *Rose and Nightingale* and the twelfth-century poet Farideddin Attari’s *Bolbolnamah* boemas. Although scholarship has not discovered absolute similarity between these and Aghtamartsi’s works, it has not discounted the influence.¹³⁷

To describe the beauty of the mistress, Aghtamartsi often took synonyms from Persian and Arabic, using names of precious stones or planets: *shams* (Sun), *zohra* (Venus), *zohal* (Saturn), *chohar* (pearl), *yaghut* (ruby), *marchan* (coral), *lal* (ruby) or numerous nouns and adjectives: *nafay* (membrane), *nigar* (image), *sharap* (drink), *shirin* (sweet), *latif* (tender), *kaman* (bow) or different expressions: *merghi sahar* (morning bird), *zar u fighan* (wailing and lament), *api hayat* (immortal water), *kah u pekah* (time and untime) or separate lines and quatrains. Such utilization of Persian and Arabic words, expressions, and forms of description was not unique solely to Aghtamartsi but also to Armenian poets before him (Frik, Kostandin Yerznkatsi, Tlkurantsi) or came after. The unhindered use of foreign vocabulary is telling of the fact that they were familiar words among Armenians, penetrated through commercial or bardic routes. For this reason songsters did not feel the need to translate them. Besides, they wanted to write songs equivalent to Persian lyricism, preserving the descriptive forms of the latter.

With regards to Aghtamartsi's versifying art, it does not differ much from previous and contemporary bards. His poetic mind is vigorous; emotions and thoughts develop in parallel, often creating a special mood.

Birds, do you know of what happened on this day?
For the pretty rose is gone from the garden.
Have you perchance seen her, or have heard whether,
A thief has stolen her or what has happened?

They say, "The creator is omnipotent;
"He sees everything in every hidden heart;
"We have not seen your rose, the lord is witness,
"Go, wander somewhere else, and look for her there."¹³⁸

Or:

For long I have no love from you,
Who taught you how to come and go?
You are pretty and beautiful,
Why do you wound me for nothing?¹³⁹

The abundant use of adjectives, epithets, and comparisons, common descriptive norms in the poetry of not only Armenians but also Near Eastern peoples, is characteristic of Aghtamartsi, too. The extravagant descriptions of nature, flowers, celestial luminaries, precious stones, dawn, and morning dew, he draws in a personal approach of experience and emotion. His chansons are written in the spirit of popular folklore and forms similar to minstrel songs.

Many of those songs are melodious and were indeed sung in their time. One such is the chanson popular in the late Middle Ages, "In spring the rose has come to the orchard," which used to be sung by Aghtamartsi's contemporary poet Hakob Artzkeatsi.¹⁴⁰ It has colorful images, synonymous words, Persian style; following the salient descriptive picture in four lines is the repeated couplet expressing the poet's personal sentiment, infusing the song with distinctive musical rhythm.

Fingers made of wax, perfume of balsam,
Almond and candy, sweet box of incense,
You crimson apple wrapped within the leaf,
Flowering garden and dew of the sun.

Drunk am I, drunk, in the daytime with sun,
Drunk am I, drunk, in the nighttime with dreams.¹⁴¹

As with this, many of Aghtamartsi's poems are also monorhymed; often each quatrain carries different rhymes.

Aghtamartsi exhibits a unique approach to meter and rhythm, and utilizes acrostics and repetitive lines.

Part III

Literature of Restoration (Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries)

16. Armenian Literature in the Seventeenth Century

In the sixteenth century Armenia became a warring stage between two new political powers: the invigorated Ottoman Turkey, formed by nomadic Central Asian races, and Savafid Persia. The marauding and pillage from both sides ended in the division of Armenia in 1555. During this bloody century, the most oppressive event was Shah Abbas's forced deportation of the Armenian population from its homeland to Persia. Setting the belongings and homes of the cruelly dislodged multitude on fire (to prevent a return) and threatening decapitation, hundreds of thousands of Armenians were driven to Persia, and a portion of those died crossing the Arax River. Through the desolate and eviscerated land, famine followed these calamities, and the plunder of Jalalis, Turkic and Kurdic hordes. The terrified and homeless populace, which hid in caverns and woods, departed from its fatherland to foreign countries, submitting to destructive famine. The Turko-Persian Wars finally ended with the signing of the treaty of 1639, which lasted eighty years; and, according to which, Armenia was again partitioned between the two, thus bringing temporary relief and peace to the ravaged land.

Although emigration from Armenia had started in very early times, it became massive during the Seljuk-Mongol invasions and reign as well as in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Thousands of Armenians settled in a number of European countries: Italy, France, the Netherlands, Crimea, Poland, and Ukraine as well as Russia, in the cities of Persia and Ottoman Turkey, India, and elsewhere.

Due to brisk commercial ties, hopeful associations started between Russian and Armenian traders. Propitious connections were established with the Russian court, too; and through the latter's diplomacy, these were transformed into political relations, forging sympathy for the Russian orientation. In the eighteenth century, prospects for the emancipation of Armenia centered on the Russian

state, which in turn was not indifferent to the Armenians (Peter I and Catherine II).

In the eighteenth century, Israyel Ori and Hovsep Emin came forth with national liberation plans developing means of struggle and designs to emancipate Armenia and established connections and relations with European states, especially Russia.

Under Davit Bek's leadership, Armenians revolted against Ottoman Turkey, and even liberated Mountainous Karabagh and Siunik but, eventually, the rebellion did not have the desired finale. While in 1796, the Russian armies, determined to end the chaotic situation in the Trans-Caucasus and unite Georgia and Armenia to Russia, started successfully capturing regions usurped by Persian khans. Then Catherine II died, and her successor, Paul I, stopped the advance, with the capture of Armenia remaining unaccomplished—a matter, which was to succeed partially only in the twenties of the nineteenth century.

* * *

The aforementioned adverse political situation in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries arrested development of Armenian culture and literature in Armenia. This gravely affected especially scholastic-educational institutions, which were already shut down since the fifteenth century.

The situation changed gradually in the 1630s and 1640s, and interest in letters and learning started to accelerate in the land. Considerable effort was spent towards the reconstruction of monastic-cultural centers, collection and recopying of ancient manuscripts, and composition of scholarly texts. The monasteries and orders of Tatev, Haghbat, Sanahin, Gandzasar were reconstructed during these years. In this century, the Metz Anabat gymnasium of Siunik opened near Tatev (1610), and monastic colleges (and presses installed there) of Amrdol Abbey in the city of Baghesh, on the Lim island in Lake Van, in Nor Jugha (New Julfa), Agulis, Constantinople, and Ejmiatzin commenced their activities. Polish-Armenian centers flourished and blossomed especially from the mid-seventeenth century onward, as did the Armenian colonies of Constantinople and Nor Jugha, where hundreds of manuscript texts were restored and copied. It is also in this century that Constantinople became an important center of Armenian culture,

playing a significant role in the life of Western Armenians until the first quarter of the twentieth century. These forces, sprouting in different locations of the world and in Armenia through the efforts of numerous ecclesiastic and secular activists and the fervent operations of the monastic orders and colleges, initiated a zealous cultural movement to save the life, language, and culture of Armenians from imminent destruction.

The poetic splendor and elevation of former centuries are no longer seen in belles lettres from the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth centuries.¹ Devastations and emigration, plunder and massacre eclipsed Armenian poetry, depriving it of its vivacious colors, and Armenian literature experienced a near demise. The new group of poets who came forth at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries (Nerses Mokatsi, Martiros Ghrimetsi, Simeon Aparanetsi, Azaria Jughayetsi, Vrtanes Sernketsi, and others) were spiritual or cultural activists, who had participated in enlightenment agitations of the land and whose oeuvre had religious or historical content. There were also balladeers, from the commoner class, who expressed their personal feelings (Kosa Yerets, Davit Saladzoretsi, Naghash Hovnatan). These used motifs close to the heart of plain folk—songs of nature and love, happy or amusing, social or personal, sad or brooding moods. Poems, which attest to the popularization and increasing secularization of poetry, thus expressed the thinking and preference of the masses. They were written in the tradition of medieval poesy, yet added new themes and trends to Armenian lyricism.

The church song, *sharakan*, did not develop after the fifteenth century. To satisfy spiritual needs in preceding and subsequent centuries, a religious poetry emerged which did not utilize metric forms of the *sharakans* or tautological ideas from the Scripture but had a free and unfettered poetic spirit. Nearly all medieval Armenian poets dealt with questions of salvation of the soul or vanity of the world and, in each of these, ideas were expressed with personal, heart-felt sentiments. This same traditional approach was also manifest in the poetry of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, where, since aspirations of strengthening the nation's existence, as always were fastened upon the Armenian Church and religion, verses dedicated to religious, scriptural subjects abound—especially narratives of Christ's birth, resurrection and revelation, and doxologies characterizing Mary and the other saints.

However, the gradual relaxation of medieval religious fervor had altered much in these pious hymns. Whereas sacred poetry had a deep veneration of faith which viewed scriptural figures as models of perfection a few centuries before, now, new circumstances and the spirit of the age had introduced changes in belief and imagery within the relationship of the corporeal and spiritual. As a result, sacred poetry of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries is colorless and does not stand out with eminent literary qualities of specimens created in earlier times; rather, it emerges as an ersatz imitation of external, formalistic functions of the originals. On the other hand, folk and minstrel songs had influenced religious poetry, in which not only the devotional nature of the composition had changed but also the language, which was the vernacular Armenian of the time, altogether free of medieval canonic forms and style. Such could be considered Davit Saladzoretsi's "Hair ararich, ter kendani" (Father Creator, Living Lord), "Yerg Asdvatzatzna" (Song to Mother of God) verses, Khaspek Khachatur's hymns dedicated to the Mother of God, Galust Kaitzak's or Hakob Tokhatetsi's poems, which although still spiritual songs yet are far distant from similar works created in medieval ages and bear the forms of folk art. This attests to the fact that religious poetry of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries had altogether diverged from the world view of medieval mysticism and asceticism. And even though this legacy does not shine with its originality or significance, yet it constitutes a large number and is relevant in terms of getting acquainted with the Armenian individual's psychological vacillations in the decades following the massacres and plunders.

Fatal horrors of the history of the Armenian people in the centuries mentioned were most extensively reflected in historical elegies. And it is not accidental that, in these years of bloody events, elegy became the most widespread genre in Armenian literature. Prolonged wars (more than a hundred years) between Ottoman Turkey and Persia became subjects for lamentations by Armenian writers, of which Minas Tokhatetsi, Hovhannes Mshetsi, Nikoghayos Stampoltsi, Simeon Aparanetsi, from the sixteenth century, and Hakop Aknetsi, Hovhannes Makuetsi, Stepanos, Ghazar and Hakob Tokhatetsis, Azaria Sasnetsi and others from the seventeenth are famous.

In the seventeenth century historical elegy acquired a different character. Elegiac colophons, the authentic rendition of events seen or

heard, with the author's sentiments, and devoid of literary ferment, become a sort of elegiac-chronicles. Narrative epics differ from these, since the subject is not descriptive but rather saturated with tragic tension, has antagonists and action, and allows the elegist's feelings to be displayed. The last type, constituting the lyrical group, is nearly totally the author's thoughts and contemplations regarding the calamitous passage, where depiction of history has an important role.

These historical elegies give a greater illustration of events, battle situations, warring armies, and contemporary cities and structures of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries than elegies written until then. In elegiac-colophons, elegiac-chronicles, as well as narrative and lyrical elegies authors communicated their immediate feelings and impressions about different episodes of those centennial conflicts and the misfortune borne by the Armenian people. As to which of these writers and to what degree they were able to generalize separate historical facts and the validity of the tragic, and elevate them to a level of artistic achievement, are dependent on each writer's poetic identity and skills. Simeon Aparanetsi's (c. 1540-1614) *I vera arman Tavrizo* (On the Capture of Tavriz) and *Voghsbank i vera takhtin Trdata tagavorin* (Let Us Mourn Over King Trdat's Throne) are lyrical.² The latter resembles Shnorhali's epic *Voghsb Yedesio* (Lament for Edessa); where, however, it is not the city that is animated through rhetorical personification but ruins of "*Trdata takht*" (Trdat's Throne), which Aparanetsi views as witnesses to Armenian glory and might and meditates on disastrous events of history.

Anxiety regarding the future of the fatherland worried individuals wandering outside Armenia, too, whose elegies are authentic recordings of the Armenian grievous soul and devastated life. Such are Stepanos and Hakob Tokhatetsis (born in the city of Yevdokia or Tokhat of Asia Minor), wherein the former is known for his *Voghsb i vera Yevdokia metzi kaghakin* (Elegy on the Great City of Yevdokia) in which horrible scenes of the capture and carnage of the city of Tokhat in 1602 by the Jalalis, abduction of children, and pillage are described with an eyewitness's recollections. Stepanos Tokhatetsi's work does not stand out for its poetic ingenuity or art, yet is rich in graphic scenery and presents the late medieval city with its structures, marketplace, workshops, and social classes. Hakob Tokhatetsi's elegy on the destruction of the same city, called *Tagh yev voghsbank i vera Yevdokia*

kaghakin (Song and Lamentation on the City of Yevdokia), is of higher literary value.³

With its numerous population, Yevdokia is laudable, like Palestine and Egypt, "as the throne of a great king."

Thou were like the land,
Wherein walked the son of God;
Honey and milk sprang from thee,
And the inhabitants were peaceful.

Yevdokia, thou desirable,
Identical to Egypt,
Treasure and silk were thine
As the throne of a great king.

Thine seat is elegant;
Within two valleys,
Thine back against the rock,
Thou look upon the plain.

From thee spring the waters,
And spread to the four corners,
Sweet-tasting for the thirsty,
And irrigating fields.

Thou had churches which
Performed strange miracles;
Their officers used to feast,
Prosper in the saint's glory.⁴

The description of the formerly ordered and glorious life of the city is contrasted to the wailing and moaning of the siege days, to scenes of massacre and pillage, by viewing the event as a response to sins committed. Tokhatetsi is optimistic, however; he is hopeful that it will revive and flourish anew, dispersing the gloom of acrid lamentation with comforting expectations of the yet to come. Here, there is animus of a sensitive and emotional author, who has the literary perception of nature and the city.

Hakob Tokhatetsi's *Voghb i vera Olakhats yerkrin* (Elegy on the Land of the Olakhs) colophon-work is also historical, where the struggle of the peoples enslaved by the sultanate of Turkey, the Cossacks and Olakhs (Moldavians), against the Turks is depicted. Here the author hopes that the achieved independence would also free thousands of Armenians residing in Moldavia. In its literary expressiveness, this elegy defers to the former, yet is relevant in terms of reflecting events of the age being evoked—the seventeenth century.

Shah Abbas's destructive deportation in the seventeenth century has been viewed as a harsh and disastrous occurrence in the history of the Armenian people and has been reflected in works of a great number of historiographers and elegists. Such are Davit Geghametsi and Hovhannes Makuetsi, who were contemporaries and eyewitnesses to those events. The poem "Voghb Hayastana ashkharhin" (Elegy on the Land of Armenia), whose author is Hovhannes Makuetsi, is written in a populist vein, with a mixture of Araratian dialect and Middle Armenian, and has an epic-lyrical quality.

In elegies of the seventeenth century, not only the events which have a historic meaning to Armenia and the Armenian people are reflected but also those of other countries, binding the future of Armenians to the fate of Christian nations. Such is Nerses Mokatsi's (c. 1575-1625, of Van) *Voghb vasn armann Yerusaghemi* (Lament determined to end the chaotic situation in the Trans-Caucasus and unite Georgia and Armenia to Russia (Lament on the Capture of Jerusalem), which considers the fall of Jerusalem as the origin of international misfortunes.

The output of the mentioned medieval elegists, which bear resemblance to folk tales, language, and style, is generally not endowed with high artistic qualities. They preserve the classical legacies of elegies created in preceding centuries and cease to exist from the mid-seventeenth century onward. Although poems with historical content continue to be written, here already tragic sentiment is absent while the lamentation verses produced express patriotic or religious emotions, lacking historical identity.

As works manifesting patriotic emotions, historical elegies, together with expatriate songs constitute medieval patriotic lyricism, which has influenced the poetry of the modern period.

Certain scriptural episodes and figures have also been the subject of elegies, among which the metric reworking of Jeremiah's *Lamentations* by Martiros Ghrimetsi (c. 1620-1683), entitled *Voghb Yeremia markarein ...* (Prophet Jeremiah's *Lamentation ...*), is memorable.⁵ The poem is written on the occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem and, in its political and psychological essence, is homophonous to Ghrimetsi's nationalistic disposition. Jerusalem, widowed and mournful, laments and protests to God for the misfortunes of her children, expressing inspirational patriotic emotions which echo the historical and political condition of seventeenth-century Armenian reality. The elegy concludes in the same medieval idea of retribution of sin that characterized nearly all previous elegies, seeking final salvation through God's clemency.

Ghrimetsi's work is made of four proportionate chapters, where different poetic rhythms and rhymes have been utilized. According to the Hebrew alphabet, each chapter consists of twenty-two verses, numbered by letters of that alphabet, *alef* to *tav*. Spontaneous, free composition, and diversity of metric forms have rendered the elegy a lyrical work, well known in its time and even sung.

The song of dispersed Armenians, poems dealing with expatriation, was also related to the political and economic conditions of the people. This was a universal subject troubling the public in the medieval period; poets wrote about it, so did folk minstrels.

On the severe pathways of life, Armenians have created melancholic and homesick songs, which are of the best fragments of folklore and have been cultivated by different writers. "No other people of the world have songs like Armenian songs—the expatriate's plaintive and love's passionate songs," writes Danish critic Georg Brandes.⁶

Being related to harsh events of Armenian life, expatriation songs evolved and developed in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. First written specimens of those songs in Armenian literature are connected to Mkrtych Naghbash's name, whose writings had a wide dissemination and even found a place in ecclesiastic canonical anthologies.

Expatriation songs of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries are sentiments of one who has lost the fatherland—meditations mixed with painful feelings of longing, sounding like patriotic songs. These differ from the expatriation songs of preceding centuries, where it was characteristic to depict the consuming economic conditions. In the cited

centuries, emigration and universal suffering of depatriation accentuated longing for the lost native land and paternal hearth more than the refugee's poor financial and legal predicament. Changes of the times had perhaps sharpened nationalistic self-consciousness and sense of belonging. Songs of Simeon Lehatsi (1584-1637), Simeon Jughayetsi (end of sixteenth century-1657) are homesick reveries which carry the anguish of separation from loved ones. With many of the poets, these songs became expressions of private emotions and experiences, representing personal suffering in its entire simplicity and immediacy. And, allegorical forms created in emulation of *Biulbiul* (nightingale) or *vairi havuk* (wild bird), numerous expressions used in oral tradition, couplets, etc., from popular artistic mediums were utilized. E.g.:

Come, biulbiul, sit on my heart,
Sing, biulbiul, call my heart ...

In this sense, Davit Saladzoretsi's work is characteristic, where the literary skill of repetitiousness is made use of—a technique extensively encountered in Narekatsi's *Book of Lamentations*.

Hand in bosom, palm to my face or confused,
My land is alien, my village loathsome, my place harsh.

Many forms and idioms of folk mentality, numerous foreign (Turkish) words and lines have found their way into expatriation songs. During the mentioned times many songbooks were published which, being anthologies of poems, were read and sung simultaneously. Poems of religious, expatriate, and patriotic content as well as hagiographies and comedies were assembled in the song-books. Populist, minstrel songs of folklore origin, ballads full of joyous sentiments were also included.

Undoubtedly, in the centuries indicated, poems with love and nature themes continued to be written, different already from chansons of medieval poesy though they continued the legacy of that poetry. These poems did not reach the emotional and warm sensitivity and depiction of nature and love, nor experienced that immense psychological duality and shock of the mutiny of body and soul—that

colorfulness of the poetic embrace of life which the talented phalanx of balladeers in preceding centuries had achieved.

There are poems where the enchanting essence of nature is considered divine or vernal renaissance is linked to the feast of Resurrection, but this is already not typical of late medieval poetry. Hovhannes Tlkurantsi and Grigoris Aghtamartsi found delight and sweetness of love in the bosom of nature; the real enjoyment of which, though, remained fettered due to their Christian mentality.

By the conception of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, nature is a source of enjoyment for the zestful, related to the peasant's life and his rural surrounding. These are simple ballads of precise content, where the medieval poets' philosophical critiques of nature are not present, but rather the connection of nature to life, the succession. Such is the picture in Stepanos Varagetsi's poem titled "Tagh garnan" (Hymn to Spring) where seasons of nature are allegorically likened to changing phases of life.

It was autumn, then came spring; the call of birds was pleasant;
Children went up mountains and sat among flowers;
They are wearing multi-colored shirts like the peacock,
Tumbling and playing and drinking sweet wine together.⁷

One of the brightest specimens of pastoral songs is Davit Saladzoretsi's superb poem "Govasank tzaghkants" (In Praise of Flowers).⁸ Nearly a hundred blossoms in name and description form a magnificent bouquet, with sparkling colors and various fragrances. Saladzoretsi is filled with joy and admiration towards nature, which carries within itself so many aromas and tinctures that seem to spill into one's heart and beautify life. Spring is viewed as a source of revival and immortality, bringing to the land diverse flowers, each of which is characterized not only by beautiful external but also healing qualities, topographical placement, and tenure. Saladzoretsi's embrace of nature is immediate and displays his literary taste, his delicate ability to appreciate beauty, his skill to notice colors and shades.

Of the twelve months, March is anchor of the year;
When the month of March arrives, the Lord commands the soil.
The soil wakes from her slumber, gives way to plant and bush.

All of the plants sprout, come out of the ground, wear green;
Then he orders the air, which pours dew from the cloud,
Sprinkles, gladdens the world, arranges the blossoms.
Heavens and the earth rejoice; the scent of immortality smells
sweet.

Flowers spring in hundred thousands, diversely dyed and
colorful;

They have varied fragrances, one prettier than the other.⁹

This naturalist attitude, which the poetry of the seventeenth century had inherited from balladeers and the period of secularization, was different in its essence and had a populist spirit. Wonders of nature, multicolored flowers, red roses, sweet-tasting fruits, becoming subjects for poetry are praised and viewed from the perspective of enjoyment. Love ceased to be considered a sin or woman an object of desire. The secularization of mores and mentality, and the influence of populist outlook on literature replaced former somewhat abstract depictions of nature, love, longing, and similar feelings by tangible sentiments. Morality gradually parted with religion and became worldly, since the contemporary age established its moral principles more on civic and rational grounds than divine canons. Love became an intimate relation, with shades of happy or unfortunate psychic experiences, while the heroine of love was represented not only in physical but also spiritual beauty, as a human individual, endowed with multifaceted lines of disposition.

One thing is noticeable—that medieval balladeers, though the first versifiers of love in Armenian poetry, did not, nevertheless, create solid portrayals of affection and intimacy. Being celibate, they remained only adorers of woman's fairness and elegance. This ardor persisted as a beautiful longing and desire; the enjoyment of which was to be brought about by poets of this late period, with their profoundly secularized inner cosmos and approach.

Audacious sentiments of affection are reflected in the love-poetry of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries; but, along with being lived experiences, they are not remarkable works. These poets were laymen and were descended from lower classes and were in no way like medieval balladeers, who were high-ranking clergymen. Being songsters of common origin, they copied oral folk art in terms of both form and

content. Instead of the lofty and inspiring psychology of love, here mundane minutiae, customs and repetitious daily activities, intimate descriptions of amorous relationships are communicated, making use of folklore images and models. Among writers of this period, Kosa Yerets and Davit Saladzoretsi display better poetic skills.

There is a haste to enjoy earthly life in Kosa Yerets's love poems, where he praises his heroine not in a dreamy inaccessible pursuit but in an irresistible and real desire. He weaves the story of his ardor, where there is no allegory but only objective feeling, also the appreciation (according to him, given by God) of the power of love and woman's beauty. He looks at these issues straightforwardly and simply, his heart is not anxious, and he is not tortured by self-flagellation. Yerets's psychology of love is related to a pastoral environment with its modes of manifestation, literary images, and comparisons drawn from life and, in this sense, is very close to *hairens* and folk limericks.

Qualities characteristic of folk art are also salient in Davit Saladzoretsi's love gazels, which are naive and honest effusions with identical patterns of representation and plebeian language of nature, love, as well as rose and nightingale themes.

A poet of the sixteenth century is also Hovasap Sebastatsi (1508/1518-unknown), who wrote ballads and epics on love, historic and devotional themes stamped with the influence of folk songs, *hairens*, and Armenian minstrels. They are written in a simple and unadorned language, partly in the Sebastia dialect. Khaspek Khachatur, Sukias, Yeremia Keomiurchian, Simeon Kafayetsi, Stepanos Dashtetsi, and others, too, wrote poems where all of them utilized the devices of *hairen* and troubadour art in parallel with legacies of medieval poesy, and prepared the way for the appearance of Naghash Hovnatan, the greatest poet of the seventeenth century.

Nature and the nature-poem came on the scene in lyricism, fused with love gazels or separate from them. The attitude toward nature had likewise changed. As in love, here, too, the layman's sentiments are descriptive, with a plain and tangible subject without abstraction and philosophical speculation.

Together with nature, the secular spirit of the age also bore songs of the banquet, of wine and merry-making (Martiros Kharasartsi, Astvatzatur and Sarkavag Berdakatsi, Tokhatetsi Khachatur the Elder,

Martiros Ghrimetsi, and others), where bacchanalia and the pleasure of epicureanism are eulogized.

My goblet, I like thee exceedingly,
And oft raising, kiss thee;
A sweet tumbler I ever drink,
And drunk with wine, wander around.¹⁰

The power and spell of merry-making, especially of wine, had been sung ever since in *hairens*. In popular conception, grape and wine were divine gifts which, by precepts of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, were not set against Christianity, since they were blessed by the Church and placed on the Holy Altar of the Mass. Reconcilement of the pagan enjoyment of wine and banqueting with Christian ideology proves that life had moved from the mystic influence of religion, and man had acquired the right to live free.

From this viewpoint, it is worth mentioning Nerses Mokatsi's poem "Vichabanutiun yerkni yev yerkri" (Disputation of Heaven and Earth), where the debate, presented in the manner of dialogue, ends in the victory of earth. This allegorical poem, which affirms the *élan vital*, is a result of the attitude of the times and, as a philosophical tendency, fused to secular sentiments of the age. And due to this, all poems of the period, be they songs of nature, love, or amusement, do not have a religious, moralistic mentality and reflect the late medieval Armenian milieu, popular life, times, and social environment—a phenomenon that occupied little space in the poetry of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. In artistic terms, these followed poetic norms of medieval lyricism (utilization of adverbs and couplets, certain patterns of analogy, rhetorical personification, etc.), but were mixed with characteristic aspects of folk songs (simplistic descriptive style, vocatives, and interjection, etc.).

The influence of populist spirit and mentality further explains the circumstance, whereby also satirical poems (Minas Tokhatetsi, Naghash Hovnatán, Martiros Ghrimetsi) appeared in literature of the centuries mentioned, where the subject was daily mundane occurrences, minute farcical events culled from life. These are witty poems, with plebeian humor, creating a happy mood and attesting to the popularization of literature.

Until the seventeenth century, certain elements of satire occur even in ancient Armenian literature: in Buzand's (fifth century) and Hovhan Mamikonian's (seventh century) works; of later periods, in Grigor Magistros (tenth to eleventh centuries), and the *David of Sasun* epic. In the twelfth to thirteenth centuries it is more manifest in Mkhitar Gosh's and Vardan Aigektsi's fables.

The Armenian people had suffered too long to satirize; they had trudged innumerable routes of tragedy, leaving behind tales of those fatal passages, singing scriptural *sharakans* and epics. Aside from that, the religious mentality and consciousness of sin had urged them to compose elegies and be consoled by divine spirit. Only the heightening of national vivacity and ascent of the secular spirit would bring the need to satirize. And, if sprightly tones of the period of secularization in the tenth to thirteenth centuries originated allegory in Armenian literature, then, beginning in the seventeenth century, satire penetrated also other literary genres, especially poetry. With peasant and sincere ingenuousness, comedic songs were written about daily incidents and subjects, and though considered weak works in literary terms by their secular ethos, became a necessary annulus to come out of medievalism. An example of such poetry is Minas Tokhatetsi's "Vasn herisi" (On Harisa) satirical poem, with an exaggerated praise of *harisa* (an Armenian dish).

All the pastors
Leave their wives,
Forget all learning
And run to the harisa ... ¹¹

Or Martiros Kharbertsi's "Vasn chakhvin" (On Pocket Knife)
ballad:

My heart trembled in my belly from terror;
I could not hold anything from fear
Of what would I answer my father;
For I have lost my pocket knife.

My pocket knife was very compassionate,
Would lovingly give me counsel

Not to sit with other men,
To be satisfied with a little wine ...¹²

Satirical themes, which entered literature beginning in the sixteenth century, have been ignored by students of Armenian literature, considering them crude and mundane products. Whereas, these pages of popular humor have a role in the secularization of Armenian literature and signal the influx of modern times. In this significant age, the ideas of mundane-satirical poems gradually broaden to handle problems of social resonance. From this point of view, Martiros Ghrimetsi's and Naghash Hovnatan's satiric metrical portraits are interesting.

* * *

In the late medieval period, man's free activity was not only revealing personal dignity and emotions but also trying to understand the age, other nationalities, and lands. In this sense, it is worth mentioning the travelogues and travel diaries, which are the subsequent development of medieval colophons and have historical, geographic, ethnographic, and literary-scholarly merit.

The oldest specimens of travelogues in Armenian literature occur in the tenth to twelfth centuries, in Simeon Hayetsi's (tenth century) and Davit Haikazn's (twelfth century) works.

Martiros Yerznkatsi, who lived in the fifteenth century, went on a long-lasting journey (1489-1496), influenced by Christopher Columbus's discoveries. He traveled in Western Europe, was in Italy, Germany, France, England, Spain and, sailing from the Iberian peninsula, wished to go on a trip around the world, hoping to find new lands. He met with Queen Isabella of Spain and a few times with Pope Innocent XVIII of Rome, who exhibited a warm regard toward him. Yerznkatsi reproduced all of his impressions in his *Travelogue* opus, which is rich with descriptive details about places and holy sanctuaries he visited.¹³

However, it was in the seventeenth century that travelogues became fully valuable, in as much as they reflect real life, cities and towns, and give descriptions and observations which reveal the authors' world view and impressions. In this sense, Khachatur Tokhatetsi's, Simeon Lehatsi's, and Hovhannes Tutunji's works are remarkable.

Khachatur Tokhatetsi, who was called Yevdokatsi being from Yevdokia city, wrote the poem "Patmutiun Venetik kaghakin" (History of the City of Venice) (1614), where he reproduced his journey to Europe and the admiration he felt on visiting Venice. The author is deeply impressed by the structures and beauty, riches and refined free manners of Venice. This extensive poem is written in a narrative-descriptive style, simple conversational language and resembles a tale. And, though Khachatur Tokhatetsi's interests and his observations regarding life and environment are not that broad, they are full of humorous disposition and colorful scenes.

Likewise, Hakob Ssetsi has written a poem of a travelogue nature, which inspiredly describes the churches, bath-houses, beautiful vineyards, abundant vegetation, and fruits of Karasu city. Another of his poems, about Constantinople, is written in yet the same spirit, where he remarks upon the famous architectural monuments of the city.

In prose, Simeon Lehatsi's *Ughegrutiun* (Travelogue) (1612) is renowned, where he tells about his long voyage, reproducing his impressions from Italy, Turkey, Armenia, Egypt, Jerusalem, and Aleppo.¹⁴ Simeon Lehatsi, who lived in the city of Lvov in Poland, departed in 1608 to begin his twelve-year long journey. He has a large scope and covers the life, manners, and civilization of the peoples of those lands broadly. And wherever he went, he was foremost interested in Armenian social, national life, and culture. Lehatsi gives information about numerous cities and dwelling places, structures, and architecture. In *Travelogue*, Lehatsi recounts his biography as well, while in the chapter "Annals," he refers to political events of the period. Lehatsi has a graceful pen and artistic taste and is able to draw the reader with his impressions and thoughts. The "Description of Constantinople" chapter of his work paints the charms of that ancient city—reflections on the Aya Sophia cathedral, the fine descriptions of old palaces, churches, and details about the inhabitants, revive the history of the city with its splendid Byzantine past and current image. As much as he is amazed by the European Christian world, architectural monuments, and civilization, he is disillusioned and bitter by the licentious, rude, and coarse manners of the Islamic world. Lehatsi's *Travelogue* is written in a *grabar*-mixed vernacular, has a brisk manner of exposition and expressive language.

Seventeenth-century clergyman Hovhannes Tutunji's travelogue (1678) titled *Patmutiun yerkrin Hapashstana* (History of the Land of

Abyssinia) is also replete with touristic impressions and observations. Here he recounts his voyage to Cairo, Abyssinia, Alexandria, Greece, Italy, and Paris, pursuing political goals related to matters of the liberation of Armenia. For over a year he lived in the royal court of Abyssinia and provides interesting details regarding the lives and manners of the people, fauna, and animal kingdom.¹⁵

Similarly, Ogostinos Bajetsi, who was bishop of Nakhijevan and wrote the *Chanaparhagrutium hEvropa* (Travelogue to Europe) account, narrates his journey in Europe.¹⁶ Being mostly an autobiography, this work is especially notable for the rich information it gives about the forced deportation of Armenians in 1604 by Shah Abbas I.

From the seventeenth century, Zakaria Aguletsi's, Yeremia Keomiurchian's, and Patriarch Minas Amdetsi's diaries are also known, where large space is given to private occurrences of one's life, relating to the historic events of the time.

Where Aguletsi scribes events of more than thirty years (1647-1681) with concise reflections and analyses, Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchian on the other hand, in his famous *Oragrutium* (Diary), achieves the best example of this literary genre with a historical and personal approach, constructing not only his own but also the epochal psychology.¹⁷

The seventeenth century is rich in chronological and historiographical works, too, among which Grigor Daranaghetsi's *Zhamanakagrutium* (Chronicle), Zakaria (Kanakertsi) Sarkavag's *Patmutium* (History) (three volumes), Davit Baghishetsi's chronicles, Hakob Karnetsi's works, and Vardan Baghishetsi's annals are notable. It should be said, that these works are far from the standards of classical historiography and compile events contemporary to the authors' or perhaps of a little earlier era; they do not have specific merit in a literary sense and are interesting from the view point of reflecting popular customs, manners, religious, and social happenings. Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchian's (famous Constantinople Armenian public activist, translator, poet, and historian, 1637-1695) *Patmutium hamarot 400 tarvo Osmantsots tagavoratsn* (Concise History of 400 Years of Ottoman Kings) and *Stampolo patmutium* (History of Constantinople) metrical works, written in *grabar*, occupy a special place in this series.¹⁸ The former is a 400-year history of the Ottoman Empire, encompassing the period 1299-1678, and consists of 1,811 couplets. It tells about kings of

the land, wars, politics, internal and external conditions, palace revolts, and rebellions. At times, certain events or ethnographical and psychological details are described with poetic inspiration, including tales and stories related to the subject. As regards "History of Constantinople," this "by itself presents the literary depiction of Constantinople, where the author visits scenic locations of the city with one Vardan vardapet and on this occasion weaves stories related to each place or building. Keomiurchian remarks upon the ways of life of the inhabitants of Constantinople (Armenians, too, among them), the wretched, the sultans, the customs of the gypsies, forming a mixed bouquet which is exceedingly colorful with its many sided aspects of oriental life. As a literary device, he used the manner of the travelogue, which gave him the means to reproduce his impressions of habits of the land, well-known ethnographic tales, palaces, and structures, composing it in an amply fluent and humorous language. Popular tales, witty fictional inventions give vivacity to the work, often woven with poetic eloquence.

Arakel Davrizhetsi, Zakaria Kanakertsi, Abraham Kretatsi, and others are historians of the epoch under study. Among these, a special place is occupied by Arakel Davrizhetsi, who was born in the city of Tabriz (Davrezh) (d. 1670). He received his education in Ejmiatzin and became a member of the order. His book, *Patmutiun Arakel vardapeti Davrizhetsvo* (History of Arakel vardapet Davrizhetsi), encompasses the history of sixty years (1602-1662). It consists of a foreword and fifty-six chapters, containing Armenocidal events of the Turko-Persian wars.

Davrizhetsi describes Shah Abbas's destructive forced deportations (which brought unbelievable suffering to the Armenian people) with real, tragic details and a patriot's anguished heart, leaving a moving impression. He wrote his opus by collecting remembrances and facts during long wanderings, in toilsome consistency, trying very hard to write factual history. Various tales, quoted in relation to any one event, are written down from the different narrations of eyewitnesses. These often relate to the same occurrences and repeat each other; yet, as distinct retellings, a few of them have a literary composition. And this circumstance has provided many later Armenian writers, particularly novelists of historical themes, the chance to create new works, such as Muratsan's historical novel *Andreas Yerets* (Andreas the Priest) (1897).

Shah Abbas's plunders and unimaginable torments suffered by the people, problems of the Armenian populace of Jugha (Julfa), and numerous other issues, Davrizhetsi presents in such a picturesque style that the enormity of horrors and misery become fully palpable, engendering hatred towards the Shah and his policies.

Davrizhetsi's work is written with sensitivity and deep patriotic inspiration, which moves the reader. The book is important also from the viewpoint that it remarks on issues of the national fate of the Georgian and Jewish peoples, gives information regarding the condition and repair of Armenian monasteries, and various phenomena (famine, earthquake, conflagration, solar eclipse). Davrizhetsi's language is *grabar* mixed with the vernacular and is sufficiently opulent. The book was first published in 1669, during his lifetime, in Amsterdam. In 1874, it was published also in French, translated by Marie Brosset; the Armenian original of the work had two further publications (1884, 1896, in Ejmiatzin) before the end of the nineteenth century.

In the late medieval period, works with historical, religious, and adventure themes were reedited, these being translations. Such are the chivalric romance *Patmutiun Parezi yev Vennayi* (History of Paris and Vienna), which Hovhannes Terzntsi reedited based on the French original (1587), or special editions of the *Alexander Romance*, "The Story of the Copper City," "The Story of the Child Farman," and other works, the originals of which were either Persian or Arabic.

* * *

Armenian printing, which, after being established in Venice in the year 1512, was progressing under severe handicaps, had a huge role in the development of Armenian culture in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. With the effort of a number of patriotic and devoted individuals, Armenian printing-houses were established outside Armenia, in several cities of the globe, such as Venice, Rome, Paris, Amsterdam, Constantinople, St. Petersburg, Lvov, Astrakhan, New Julfa, Calcutta, Madras, and elsewhere, publishing memorable works of Armenian and foreign authors.

In the field of seventeenth century Armenian printing, one notable is Voskan Yerevantsi (1614-1674), who published the first printed and illustrated *Sharaknots* (Missal) in Amsterdam, the

Aibbenaran (Primer), *Kerakanutium* (Grammar book), and finally brought to light the first printed Armenian Bible (1666-68), which is considered "the crown of ancient Armenian printing," published with great care as well as artfully (1,462 pages, 159 illustrations). The *Ashkharhatsuits* (World Map), Vardan Aigektsi's fables, *Aghvesagirk* (Fox Book), Arakel Davrizhetsi's *Girk patmutiants* (Book of Histories), the *Mashtots*, and the New Testament were also published by Voskan in Amsterdam. The tirage of a book being published reached a few thousand copies in Voskan's print-shop—a fact, which greatly enhanced the spread of Armenian books not only in Europe, but in Armenia proper as well.

In 1669, Voskan Yerevantsi moved the print-shop from Amsterdam to Livorno (Leghorn), then to Marseille; but, not too much later, in 1674, he died. His successors carried on his business with hardships and struggle. The print-house, established in 1660 in Amsterdam by Matteos Tzaretsi and called Voskanian after Yerevantsi, functioned until 1686, and during its twenty-six years of existence, produced forty titles of Armenian books in the three aforementioned cities.

The printing house of the Vanandetsis', likewise established in Amsterdam where Movses Khorenatsi's *Hayots patmutium* (History of the Armenians) and the first printed Armenian map called *Hamataratz ashkharhatsuits* (Extensive World Map) were published for the first time in 1695, had a special role in the spread of Armenian culture. Publication of Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians* helped in the development of Armenology in Europe, engendering interest towards the ancient past of the Armenian people and circumstances of its existence becoming an inexhaustible source of historical and linguistic studies. It was following this, that in 1736, the English Whiston brothers translated Khorenatsi into Latin, in London, by means of which Armenians entered eighteenth-century English historian Edward Gibbon's acclaimed *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

The Vanandetsis published numerous devotional and secular books and entered into cultural relations with a number of famed personalities of their time, among whom were the German philosopher Gottfried Leibnitz, the orientalist Johan Joachim Schröder who published the opus *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae, antiquae et hodiernae cum Variapraxios materia* (Treasury of the Armenian Language) in

Amsterdam, in 1711. The Armenian portion of the book was printed by the Vanandetsis and is called *Aramian lezvi gandz* (Treasury of the Aramian Language), where the grammar of *grabar* and the eastern Armenian vernacular are explained.

In the matter of investigating the Armenian language, Schröder was first to accept the antiquity of Armenian, expressing the opinion that it has existed since the time of the construction of the Tower of Babel.

* * *

In the seventeenth century, Armenian literature was further enriched by numerous and multi-varied translated works. Stepanos Lehatsi (Ejmiatzin) translated Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (*Girk bnazantsakanats Aristoteli* [Aristotle's Book of Metaphysics]), Proclus's *Book of Causes* (*I grots patcharats Aristoteli kam vomants tvi Prokghi* [Aristotle's Or, According to Some, Proclus's *Book of Causes*]), Thomas Aquinas's *De anima* (*Haghags hogvo banakani* [On Rational Spirit]), *De virtutibus* (*Hayeli varuts* [Mirror of Morals]), Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite's *On the Celestial Heirarchy* (*Haghags yerknainots kahanayabetutiants*), the Koran, and other works into Armenian.

Yeremia Keomiurchian translated Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians* (excerpts), David's *Psalms*, the New Testament, and partially the Old Testament into Turkish. Notable among Hovhannes Holov's (also called Kostandnupolsetsi) translations is Thomas à Kempis's famous *Imitatio Christi* (*Hamahetevumn Kristosi* [Imitations of Christ]) from Latin, which had achieved a great name in Europe with its mystic content. Of Holov's works, similarly creditable is an extensive study consisting of 840 pages which interpreted the psalms in vernacular, called *Parzabanutium hogenvag saghmosatsn Davti* (Elucidation of David's Soul-stirring Psalms). It was published by Nahapet Giulnazarian Aguletsi in Venice, in 1687.

The Armenian translation (supposedly, from Latin) by Hakob Tokhatesi, of the book *Yotn imastasirats* (The Seven Sages), a novel known the world over, was published in the Armenian printing house of Livorno (in 1614). It had been composed in India and spread everywhere, like the novel of Barlaam and Joasaph. The Armenian translation of this book served as a source for the Turkish publication (Nahapet Terzian translated it from Armenian into Turkish in 1803, in

Constantinople), as well as for the Russian (D. Serebriakov, in 1847) and French (Victor Chauvin, in 1919) translations. *Patmutiun dardzi yev mkrtutian Hovhannu Hovsepa Kaktikian metzanun Hrei rabunvo* (The History of the Renowned Hebrew Rabbi Johanna Josephus Kaktikian's Conversion and Baptism), which Hakob vardapet Jrpetian translated from Italian into Armenian, was printed in Livorno, in 1697.

In the seventeenth century, various Armenian books were being published in a number of European cities, organized by the S. Congregatio de Propaganda Fide of Rome, with the aim of spreading Catholicism in Armenia. Though the activity of this organization had a religious nature, some of its members learned and studied Armenian and published works and dictionaries of scientific specialized merit related to the Armenian language and grammar. Latin clergymen, such as Francisco Rivola, Paulus Piromalli, and Clemens Galanus became eminent Armenologists. The first of these, Francisco Rivola, published an Armenian-Latin lexicon (*Dictionarium armeno-latinum*) in Milan (1621), republished in 1633 (Paris). In 1624 his grammar of the Armenian language was likewise published in Milan, in Latin (*Grammaticae armenae libri quatuor*). Dominican clergyman Paulus Piromalli, who was a preacher in Armenia, compiled an Armenian-Latin dictionary containing 35,000 words, as yet unpublished. More remarkable than these two is theologian and Armenologist Clemens Galanus (1610-1666), who published a book (two volumes) in Rome, in 1645, the first part of which is grammar in Armenian and Latin and has this title: *Grammaticae et logicae institutiones linguae literalis armenicae* (*Kerakan yev tramabanakan neratzutium ar himastasirutiuun shahelo* [Grammatical and Logical Introduction for the Attainment of Wisdom]), while the second portion is logic, written in Armenian and titled *Drunk pilisopayutian asatsial est hunats yev latinatsvots lochika yev est hayots targmani tramapanutium ...* (Systems of Philosophy, Called Logic by the Greeks and Latins, and According to Armenian Translated as *Tramabanutium*). This study played a prominent role in Armenian life in the matter of formulating the subject of logic, since it was the first textbook printed relating to that topic. Galanus's most well-known work is about the Armenian people and past history of its church and is titled *Conciliationis ecclesiae armenae cum Romana* (*Miabanutium hayots surb yekeghetsvuin ent metzi surb yekeghetsvuin Hrovma* [Conciliation of the Holy Armenian Church with the Greater

Holy Church of Rome]). The study, which the "Propaganda Fide" publications issued in 1650 and 1658 in Rome, consists of three expansive volumes written in the Armenian and Latin languages. Especially valuable is the first volume, titled "Historical," saturated by historical facts culled from Armenian, Greek, and Latin primary sources. It often transgresses against equitable judgment and, corrupting facts, serves the political purpose of subjecting the Armenian Church to Rome with a tendentious consistency. The second and third volumes of the study are religious debates between creeds of the Chalcedonian and Armenian Churches, for which they have been called "Polemical."

As a summation for all these, it is possible to say that in all the printing of aforementioned centuries, from the viewpoint of Armenian literature, publications of valuable works, such as the Holy Bible, works of Armenian men of letters, a few books of poetry and *Fox Book* form an insignificant quantity. The works of Armenian secular poets Frikk, Kostandin Yerznkatsi, Naghash Hovnatan, Sayat-Nova, and others remained in obscurity and were not published until the nineteenth century. In the publication catalogues of those centuries, translations from the literature of other peoples constitute a small number. And, even though Armenian educational and printing centers were located in European lands, Armenians remain uncommunicative with contemporary figures and themes of European literature and culture, and translate and print works such as "Story of the Seven Sages," "Story of the Copper City," which do not represent a great literary value. Time was needed to conquer medieval reasoning and also courage and intelligence, to acquire and internalize the progressive European mentality with its philosophical and aesthetic schools.

17. Medieval Folk Songs

Also a part of literature of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries were folk songs and lyric poems, which were not recorded in the pages of Armenian belle lettres but survived on the lips of the people. Despite this fact, with their candor and simple attractiveness, folk songs spread among the masses and, starting with Khorenatsi's times, had a large influence on written literature, from devotional songs to medieval lyricism.

Few folk songs of the past have been saved. What has reached us are only specimens burrowed in individual manuscripts and songs placed in certain poetry books and anthologies, compiled or published mainly beginning in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. This heritage, populist in character, is divided into two kinds—*hairens* and non-*hairens*. With regard to *hairens*, due to their attractiveness, these have been subject to deeper consideration than non-*hairens*, the study of which remains pending until now.¹

Since medieval folk songs were written down in later centuries, it is hard to tell which of these songs are individual creations and which popular. One thing is clear—that each song had its author. But those songs, which found wide acceptance by the masses, were subjected to changes in the course of time, bore the stamp of folk taste and thought, and, losing their authors, were called popular.²

Sometimes these have preserved certain elements of the private song and, having been worked over on an individual level, even had several versions. In as much as the power of folk art was strong, they were long and frequently in use, thus extending the life of the song, reaching until later times. Numerous investigative studies have specified the authorship of folk songs, the circles of their influence, the themes they engaged, and their correlations. This literary heritage tells about the events of Armenian life—disasters, misfortunes, labor and customs, and merriments, chief among which are love songs. These especially have a peasant mark on them, because they are related to village manners and rites, rural activities, tilling and sowing, harvesting and threshing, and

the four seasons of nature. After the tenth century, with the development of cities, the moods and taste of trade classes also found place in oral folk tradition.

An essential underlying quality is characteristic of the folk songs—that is allegory and metaphor, which often helped the masses express their feelings, sadness, and joy. The partridge, crane, nightingale, turtle-dove; plants: rose, violet, narcissus; the sea, woods, mountain, spring, fall, summer, winter, etc., all are *dramatis personae* in these songs, with human attributes.

Armenian history, with its tragic episodes, has created songs of patriotism and expatriation. One of the oldest with this theme is the song “Kakavn i karin nstel” (Partridge Sitting on the Rocks) (tenth to fourteenth centuries) where the bird, which has lost its children, personifying the Armenian nation is lamenting its ill fortune. A variety of songs and versions about the unfree and mourning partridge have been preserved from the Middle Ages: “Vairi havuk mi ... ” (A Wild Bird...), “Kakavn i karin nstel ... ” (Partridge Sitting on the Rocks ...), “Kanche, krunk, kanche” (Sing, O Crane, Sing), “Aravotun trchunkn amen” (All the Birds at Dawn), “Biulbiuln e kainer karin” (The Biulbiul Has Sat on the Rock), or the song “Avagh ezLeonn asem” (I Say Alas for Leon) which tells of the feelings of longing for the motherland by Levon, son of King Hetum of Cilicia, who has been taken into captivity (Sing, O Crane, Sing).

Sing, O crane, sing, thine voice in my heart,
Thou have a very sweet voice;
Autumn is near, thou want to leave,
May thou return in grace, bring tidings of spring.

Sing, O crane, sing, thou are sweet-voiced;
Thine call comes from afar, thou are matchless;
Thou soar high and mighty in thine flight,
I ask thee to bring me some news from home.

Sing, O crane, sing, thine voice in my heart,
May thou go and return in grace, reach thine desire;
I fell into exile, sad is this captive;
Please bring a note from home, console me.

Sing, O crane, sing, beloved of my soul,
 I know—thou fly high, see everything,
 May I kiss thine eyes—thou see my home,
 Which is ever and ever in my heart.

Let me complain to thee, O laudable bird,
 I have fallen into pitiful and tearful exile,
 With no kin and neither a beloved here,
 My soul is bitter, my eyes are weeping.

Go, crane, go, may the lord be with thee,
 And keep thee from peril to thine sons' sons,
 I am an exile in a foreign land,
 The lord has destined us to our place.³

Perhaps no song has been so wide-spread and close to the heart as "Krunk" (Crane), created in the seventeenth century.⁴ This is a popularized individual song (the author is unknown), has various versions, the oldest of which is composed of twelve verses.⁵

O crane, where from? I am a slave to thine voice,
 O crane, do thou not have some news from our land?
 Do not run away, thou will soon join thine flock;
 O crane, do thou not have some news from our land?

I have left my possessions and vines behind,
 And as I sigh, my heart is torn up,
 O crane, stay a while, thine voice in my soul;
 O crane, do thou not have some news from our land?

O God, I ask of thee pity and sympathy,
 The exile's heart is sore, his liver wounded,
 The bread he eats is bile and the water evil;
 O crane, do thou not have some news from our land?

I know not the day of the week, nor the Sunday,
 Spit has run through me, has me on the fire,

I do not mind my burning, but I long for thee;
O crane, do thou not have any news from our land?⁶

In ancient traditions and tales of Armenians, the crane is a wise, kind, and good-tidings-bearer bird, about which songs were composed in the late Middle Ages. In these songs, the crane is a figure who takes and brings news to and from the *gharip* (expatriate) children of the people, to whom the Armenian exile, wandering in foreign lands, appeals, hoping to get news from his homeland. Each verse of this song with powerful emotional impact ends with the line "O crane, do thou not have some news from our land?," making a strong impression on the reader. The feeling of hope and faith with expectation of getting some *khaprik* (news), accompanies the expatriate in all his meditations and reaches the peak of tension when, in sharp anger, he addresses the crane that flies from land to land with its flock and yet does not bring any news and asks it to leave and go away from his homeland.

Thou did not answer me, thou got up and left;
O crane, go, go away from our beloved land.

"Crane" is written in western Middle Armenian and has a unique stylistic and lexical construction, seasoned with folk figures of speech and analogies. This song might not have found the wide audience and popularity it does, were it not for the moving music accompanying the poem, supposed to have been composed by the same person who wrote the words—a phenomenon generally characteristic of medieval musicianship until the eighteenth century. With its tender and painful human psychology, warmth of emotion and power of inspiration, "Crane" is an exceptional creation, wide-spread in Constantinople (where also it was printed for the first time in 1709), Adrianapolis, Bithynia, Aleppo, Jerusalem, and elsewhere.

Compositions concerning earth and heaven, the spiritual and corporeal, as well as popular manners and daily labor—wrapped in colors of gloomy and melancholic reality as in "Sarern amen dziun yeker" (Snow Has Covered All the Mountains), "Asis-Masis lernet i var" (Down the Mountain Masis), "Aravotun trchunkn amen" (All the Birds at Dawn)—and love and wedding tunes form a distinct group in medieval folk tradition. The original love songs, called *khaghs*, are

customarily quatrains, tercets, sometimes even couplets, the most widespread metrical form of which are the heptasyllabic among eastern Armenians and the octosyllabic quatrains among western Armenians. These are often sung with refrains, such as *Jan giulum kasem, ke parem, jan giulum, jan, jan* (I'll say my dear one, I'll dance, my dear, dear rose) or *Ari, yar, ari, khrov mi kena, Astvoris ban mezi chi mna* (Come, darling, come, don't stay upset; nothing will be left to us), etc.

I am standing, I cannot move,
I am choked up, I cannot cry;
Since thou have been gone,
I cannot utter thine name.

Or:

Thou are an apple on the tree,
Thou are a flower on the mountain;
A biulbiul that chants a sweet song,
Thou are standing on the stone.

Or:

The sky is clouded, the earth dewy,
With sweetest songs I have loved thee.

These songs are objective reflections of the pastoral environment, unadorned emotions of the amorous youth or girl, who sing what they feel and see without impediment. These rural tunes gradually expanded, creating a variety of folk songs. The most interesting among these are wedding songs, also called *tzaghkotses*, through which practices of Armenian wedding rites that come from ancient times are displayed ("En Astutzo orhnutenov" [With God's Blessing], "Tzaghketsav tzarn kenats" [The Tree of Life Blossomed], "Orhnia i Hisus" [Blessed in Jesus], "Guzal merek tesa" [I Saw a Beauty Yesterday], "Astvatz shnorhavor" [May God Bless], which is sung to this day.)

Since ancient days, during the wedding ceremony, Armenians have had the custom of presenting a specially prepared artificial tree,

adorned with fruits, flowers, and bright threads and, as the family tree of life, sung with opulent dances and banquets. Beginning with king and queen, the groom and bride, to the most distant individual of the dynasty, each would have a place on branches of the tree and be praised, thus strengthening ties of kinship and unity of the family.

Our tree of life blossomed,
Behold, which is it?
The cross enthroned upon it,
Behold, which is it?

Our tree of life blossomed,
That is its monarch;
The cross enthroned upon him,
That is his crowning.

That apple, chief apple,
Behold, which is it?
That apple, fatty and round,
Behold, which is it?

That apple, chief apple,
Is the king's father;
That apple, fatty and round,
Is the single sister-in-law.

That apple on the right chair,
Behold, which is it?
That apple on the left chair,
Behold, which is it?

That apple on the right chair,
Is the best man;
That apple on the left chair,
Is the queen.

That shepherd, he was big
And he was matchless;

The flaming sword in hand,
He was so unequaled.

That shepherd, who was big,
Was the bride's brother;
The flaming sword in hand,
That was the godfather.⁷

Songs of the baptismal rite (out of which lullabies later developed), funeral and mourning, as well as tidings with secular content, were also extensive in the Middle Ages.

Generally, songs of the oral tradition are closely related to immediate daily life and conceptions of the people, tied to its imagination and experience. They are altogether far from official ecclesiastical ideology of the same period; they are vivacious, fervent, and free from superstition. The idea of God does not weigh upon nor impede or limit emotions. The folk song is free not only with its ideas but also with its experiences, humor, and dialect-laden language. It does not become subjected to the ruling ideology of the surrounding. The national fate, persecutions, and horrors are not considered as fruits of sins committed, neither love or secular merriments as repulsive. This is why folk creation could not find a place in the official literature of the Middle Ages.

Folk songs are not distinguished by sparkling and magnificent epithets, adjectives, or lively analogies. But instead, that heritage is comprehensive; it reflects life in its varied aspects—customs, activities, images of the surroundings, and small or large spiritual emotions. Abstract and ascetic love, or the duality of soul, do not exist in folk songs as they did with individual balladeers of the Middle Ages. Woman is a familiar and known being here, who is loved, pursued, carried off, whose eyes-and-brows one is enslaved to, with whom one has a rendezvous on moon-lit nights over the roofs, or whom one slanders, curses, and maligns. These are living and breathing depictions of manners, bearing ethnographic significance in understanding the life, conditions, perceptions, and taste of the Middle Ages. Artistically, they are sufficiently polished metric works, especially from the viewpoints of poetic structure, regular metricalization, and rhyming.

The most widespread form of folk poesy are *hairens* which, progressing from the most ancient centuries, became the preferred type for many medieval Armenian poets (from mourning and *goghtan* songs to Narekatsi, Shnorhali, Grigor Tgha, Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, etc.). *Hairens*, also sung by minstrels, are regarded as a type of oriental poetry, possessing a unique meter, and were both loved and extensively used in Armenia.

Hairens

Among Armenian folk and ancient minstrel songs, *hairens*, attributed to Nahapet Kuchak, have a special position due to their metric structure.

Diverse opinions have been expressed about this matter in scholarship. In 1882, Aristakes Tevkants published a book of *hairens* in Tiflis, titled *Hayerg, meghedik, taghk, yev yergk* (Armenian-Songs, Melodies, Tunes and Lyrics), claiming the troubadour Nahapet Kuchak of Van, who lived in the sixteenth century, as the author. In 1902, Arshak Chopanian added new ones on Tevkants's *hairens* and prepared the massive work *Nahapet Kuchaki divane* (Nahapet Kuchak's Tivan), in Paris, considering Kuchak as the author. And again, in 1940, he published the book *Hairenneru burastane* (The Orchard of *Hairens*) where, with a little reservation, he confirms the same opinion. Later, many followed it. "That an author's name is not available," wrote Chopanian, "was not an evidence that those poems, a substantial part of which bear the mark of a private original talent, were a collective nameless production. An undiscovered great Armenian poet was present there."⁸ Chopanian was basing his assessment on the identical style and metrication of *hairens* which, in his opinion, were the result of a "school" established by "a great poet." "One author, in the very beginning, and numerous recultivators and imitators"—this is the conclusion.⁹ He posits that the author-troubadour had lived in Akn, wandered from city to city in western Armenia and Asia Minor, and, settling in Van, "became renowned as an ingenious troubadour and, having died there, is buried in Kharakonis."¹⁰ The foundation for such opinion were the following lines written in 1637 in the colophon of a manuscript gospel: "Bethink of Kuchak and his grandfather, master Nahapet, who was called *ashgh* (troubadour) Kuchak ..."; and thus this

valuable literary heritage was bound with Kuchak's name. And as such, it has been accepted for decades, published and analyzed, becoming a cherished name about which Armenian and foreign writers have spoken with high praise.

In his study *Hin gusanakan zhoghovrdakan yerger* (Ancient Minstrel Folk Songs), published in 1931, Manuk Abeghian approaches the issue from an entirely different aspect. Abeghian, Karapet Kostanians, Nerses Akinian, Harutiun Kiurtian, as well as researchers of later periods (Asatur Mnatsakanian, Levon Khachikian, Emmanuel Pivazian, and others), have expressed the opinion that *hairens* are ancient minstrel songs of a folk nature, created by troubadour-singers. Those songs do not belong to Kuchak and were created not in Kuchak's century (the sixteenth) but long before. Abeghian refutes the hypothesis that *hairens* belong to Kuchak, stating that, with one exception, Kuchak's name is not mentioned in written colophons or books of poetry. Besides, the few poems in Armenian and Turkish that have reached us from the sixteenth century under Kuchak's name have an underlined religious and admonitive content and do not have any internal or external relation with the songs called "kuchakian." The other important footing Abeghian considers are linguistic layers, which testify that *hairens* are literary products of different ages and different locations. Examining the origin, language, metrication, and versions of *hairens* in detail, Abeghian comes to the conclusion "that they have been orally transmitted poems and are not the creation of one era and one individual; but, on the contrary, numerous generations have toiled on them and they have naturally been subject to change, recultivation, and development in the hands of minstrels, as they were sung, throughout the centuries. In other words, those minor poems have shared the life of folk songs and, as folk songs, recorded at various times and places and by various people...."¹¹

Scholarly studies of the latest period confirm that the rich collection of those medieval songs are not Kuchak's; only nine belong to him, seven of which are in Turkish. These bear Kuchak's name and have reached us through different manuscripts.¹²

"The name Kuchak," writes Paruir Sevak, "is used in the conditional sense, as an equivalent to *hairens*," totally accepting Abeghian's opinion that attributing *hairens* to Kuchak is the result of misapprehension, "while now and henceforth, at least of ignorance."¹³

Thus, this error became tradition and has been accepted for decades, and even until today many attribute them to Kuchak and publish this folk heritage under his authorship. Disregarding this approach, we think it is time that this treasure of oral tradition known by Kuchak's name be placed in its rightful place, analyzed, and presented as folk creation, and not tied to a commanding personality's name.

* * *

Mostly devotional songs were gathered in medieval poetry books. Later, poetry books were compiled in which secular poems entered, too, called *Tagharan hogo yev marmno* (Poetry Book of Soul and Body). By the seventeenth century, almost only secular songs were included. In a poetry book prepared in that same century, the compiler expresses his unease about love songs since, considered "profane," "lascivious," and "diabolical," they were viewed as prohibited poems by the Armenian Church and were not recorded; while in the Islamic world, volumes were being assembled with those songs.¹⁴

Hairens were created by minstrels, singers "of unknown name," and were slowly popularized and called minstrel folk songs. It is to be noted, that the correlations of those poems were stronger with ancient and medieval minstrel-folk songs than with troubadour songs which came forth later. *Hairens* are national indigenous creations with unique characteristics and metrication, while troubadour songs are very oriental with heterogeneous forms and meters. "Each of the oriental peoples," writes Shavigh Grigorian, "has in its turn its own national-folk song form which, being the inheritance of the given people, usually carries its name too (though not always, of course); just as ours is *hairen*, the Turk's is *tiurki*, the Azerbaijani is *bayati*, the Russian is *chastushka*. Just as this latter cannot be identified with Armenian folk tunes or Azerbaijani *bayatis*, likewise (and much more) our *hairens* do not have any line of comparison with Turkish songs called *tiurki* nor with Russian *chastushkas*."¹⁵ They are four-lined minor poems, each bearing one coherent idea and expressing that idea with apt and impressive, fine, witty, and polished lines, amazing with their literary high quality cultivation and perfection. Dominant in *hairens* is the real folk spirit, the popular conception of life and love with which the religious attitude is not congenial. Minstrels, who performed these songs "with

instruments," were singers of joy and were far from piety, religion, and church. There is no conflict of soul and body; there is no religious constriction. These express happy and careless moods, secular feelings of earth-bound man. Here, fondness of life is altogether far from mystic and national worries and sentiments and relies on enjoyment of life and merriment only.

Hairens have been written since Narekatsi's times. The tenth to fourteenth centuries have been considered the real flowering years of this poetic genre.¹⁶ It is also known that *hairens*, transmitted to us mainly from sixteenth century manuscripts as a unique poetic form though of oral tradition origin, are yet different from folk songs. These were called *hairen* or *hayeren*, because they are metricized "in the national form," that is, they are Armenian, as distinct from Persian and Turkish similar songs performed in those centuries.

They are written in couplets, of which quatrains or octets are formed. Each line has fifteen metrical feet, consisting of consecutive two-syllabic and three-syllabic metrical feet (2-3-2, 3-2-3).

*Karmir/ vard kananch/ tepov, kananch tup/ karmir/ khendzorov,
Kani/ lam u zkez/ uzem, zartetsnem vogots/ hanelov.*¹⁷

Red rose on a green bush, green bush with red apple,
How I weep and wish thee, awake thee with sighs.

Or:

*Gishers yes i kun ei, im srtis akanjn er i bats;
Siru havn i dzain eatz, lok lesets srtiks u doghats;
Ku tver im yarin lezun an havun berann er deratz;
Ov im srtis gangetin an havun er hasketsutsatz.*¹⁸

While I slept at night, the ear of my heart was awake;
When the love-bird started singing, my heart heard it and
trembled;
It seemed my love's tongue was placed in the mouth of that
songbird;
Who could have taught my heart's woe to that bird?

All four lines of the quatrains have the same rhyme usually, sometimes the last two lines have different rhymes, and at other times, the second and fourth lines.

According to Abeghian, with assorted arrangement of rhymes and structure, *hairens* resemble the Persian gazel, formed by two lines and each couplet is called a *beyt*, which in Armenian is called a *tun* (both terms literally mean "house," but used here as "verse" or "stanza").¹⁹ In a general sense, *hairens* are oriental in composition, with a unique meter, giving a particular rhythm to the poem. According to Chopanian, they used to have Armenian music for which they were called *hairen*.²⁰ Abeghian supposes that this is related not to the music but the structure, metrication of the poem, like poems in Greek literature composed in Sapphic stanzas.²¹ Scholarship confirms that mourning and love songs which existed long ago were composed with the meter of *hairens*. Their traces are noticeable in the religious poems of Narekatsi and Shnorhali. Frik, Hovhannes Pluz, Khachatur Kecharetsi, Arakel Siunetsi, Grigoris Aghtamartsi, Mkrtich Naghash, and others have also composed poems with the same meter. Already in manuscripts from the thirteenth century we come across *hairens* with love, expatriation, and admonitive content, sung by minstrels at assemblies and banquets.

Hairens, which found their way in poetry books of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, are written in Middle Armenian, at times utilizing *grabar* and various dialects, while at other times, mixed with New Armenian. Since these poems were composed impromptu and were transmitted from one to another orally, this resulted in a few versions of the same song. It is rare that the same song is written identically in two different manuscripts. Passing from century to century and place to place, they have sustained alterations. Sometimes the same line or verse appears in various songs, and at other times different quatrains are linked together to increase the volume. This was done particularly during banquets, since love songs of limited size or short wedding tunes would not satisfy the demands of the audience.

The old types of these poems were called *antunis*, wide-spread in the regions of Akn, Van, Kharberd, Alashkert, and Basen, and were recorded during the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries.²² These are songs of weeping and joy and have the meter, subtlety, and musicality of *hairens*. Musically, the performance of *antunis* is considerably complex. They were sung with sad tunes and often interrupted by recitative

couplets, refrains. It is supposed that since expatriate songs expressed the longing and sorrow of the homeless, they were called *antunis* (literally, "of the homeless").

With their style and motifs, *hairens* stand very close to folk songs. Nonetheless, they do not possess the plebeian simplicity of folk songs but rather are written according to the taste and level of the urban population. Even the adjectives and characterizations utilized confirm, as Abeghian notes, that they come from wealthy urban and genteel life with delicate taste—gauze shirt, silk buttons, pearl string, gold-threaded cover, elevated table, French lock and key, etc. It is a noted fact that contemporary life with its activities is absent from *hairens*, except for songs depicting the expatriate's painful condition. However, characteristics of manners and customs have been reflected here: falling ill from love, speaking in gestures of eyes and brows, secret affection, forced marriage, elopement, and numerous other aspects. *Hairens* are so varied in the experiences and contents they express, that this has given credence to suppose that they are creations of not one but numerous authors.

It is impossible to deny the influence of Persian, Arab, and Turkish poetry. Some of the critics have even noticed a Hellenic taste in them, due to the fact that the Akn region was for a long period under Byzantine rule. Islamic love songs, in particular, with their oriental sweetness and colors, have affected *hairens* where numerous Turkish and Persian words and idioms utilized attest to that fact. However, this influence is more external-material or objective than internal. Delicacy, depth, spirit, and restraint of emotion of the Armenian psychological structure, even in its pagan eruptions, is so fine and polished that it is altogether different from similar songs of the aforementioned peoples. It has a different quality, different posture and springs from a different mentality. And due to these qualities they are deeply Armenian songs, local and native. This is what the Russian critic and poet Valeri Bryusov writes about the creations of Kuchak, that is, about *hairens*:

"Saadi's, Hafiz's, and even Omar Khayyam's lyres serve the kings and nobility. Those poets were courtesans, and their poems are steeped in the palace, shine with royal splendor. This does not exist in the simple poetry of Nahapet Kuchak. He is independent in the expression of his feelings and closer to the crowd in the street than to the footsteps of the palace. His voice rings not for the 'mighty of the world'

but rather in popular assemblies. The only sultan in front of whom Kuchak bowed his head was his eternal and omnipotent goddess—Love.”²³

Unimpeded feelings of love, sad and wandering expatriate’s moans, sagacious admonitives, gentle lullabies, and mourning songs—all of these flowed from limpid creative springs, from personal depths of experience, and emotion. These are sincere, heart-throbbing songs without poetic embellishments and overloaded thoughts.

Foremost, *hairens* are love songs which tell about that noble and powerful human emotion. Admiration and enjoyment of secular life appear in these songs in the infinite force and effect of love toward woman, in full appreciation of woman’s beauty and charm.

With their specificity and daring spirit, *hairens* are set against the feudal mentality while, with their life affirming and humanistic attitude, being cherished everywhere.

Unlike with medieval balladeers, *hairens* of love do not have abstract contents. What is displayed here is the spiritual universe of man, while love toward woman is presented in hot and lusty emotions, with a splendid literary fusion of folk language, customs, and manners. There is such sincerity in that love that the individual himself, with living and breathing feelings, is visible behind each line. And it is this which elevates the cognitive merit of this lyrical heritage, and these songs become dear and charming love poems for all times. Here already one is not amazed by opulent oriental-traditional style descriptions of woman’s beauty and, generally, the feeling of love which are far from being coherent. Each medieval *hairen* is a moment of experience with its own content, a visible mark of the environment and often endowed with internal activity and motion.²⁴

My heart of hearts came from the bath in all her beautiful attire.
I went to greet her in the street, a narrow bustling thoroughfare.
She raised the corner of her veil and whispered with a glance of
fire:

“Go now away. But come at night: much can be done when
there’s no light.

I’ll hold you in my arms till dawn: you’ll kiss me to your heart’s
desire!”²⁵

In *hairens*, love is the strongest human feeling, poured into the singer's heart at the moment it is revealed in the universe.

When love came to this world, it came and dwelled in my heart;
And then out of my heart, it flowed from land to land.

It beautifies man as the dewy green adorns nature; but when love departs, everything is covered with snow and frost. The singer complains of his abundance of love, since he is attracted to every beauty he meets, and protests to God as to why He has created that beauty and still considers his love a sin.

Your eyes: the deep blue sea,
 your brows: the clouds at night.
Your cheeks and face are aglow
 and rose-petal-bright.
Wherever you go
 no need for candle-light.
The shimmer of your breasts
 brings the dead back to life.²⁶

Or:

I am the eye, you are the light, my love.
 Blind without light is the eye.
I am a fish, the water you, my love.
 Without water fish must die.
If you pull a fish from the river
 And throw it in another it will live—
But if I am parted from you
 I'll die without hope of reprieve.²⁷

The poet considers himself, as one burnt from love, neither dead nor alive, like the bird in the sky would not eat seeds on the ground but soar above, when suddenly it falls "head over heel" in the invisible trap of love and becomes a slave to that feeling, the power of which could not be resisted even by the stone. And the pagan Armenian spirit erupts

in bright moods of careless enjoyment, deifying love, desire, and pleasure.

The feeling, turned into worship, is set with all its contents against the traditional medieval attitude; a contrast that, with its unrestricted daring, confirms the value and charm of earthly life. And even if some expressions of *hairens* seem immodest and incomprehensible, it still does not signify immoral inclinations, since humanistic tendencies of the age, in order to get established and stabilized, were resisting the world-denying Christian sermons with more extreme modes.

Here, love is emotional in essence and wholly replete with secular desires, also imposing a unique poetic posture on *hairens*. These songs of folk balladeers are mostly decent poems, where emotion is not restricted by veils of modesty. These are considerably daring sometimes in their forms expressing lustful feelings but never cease to be true poetry and are not reduced to another type of literature. Similar songs and dances existed in ancient centuries, as mentioned in certain testimonies of Armenian chroniclers or even in the *Song of Songs*, when around feverous tables of libation during banquets or weddings, female dancers and minstrels entertained the gathering of males, whose wives and daughters would not be participating.

The minstrel sings his poem as he feels it, in simple words and reasoning without any attempt at artificiality and genteelness. And that simplicity and warm oriental spirit increased the emotional dynamism of his love songs. This is where the popularity of *hairens* comes from, achieving even a pan-human force. Of course, inarguably, such an élan of versification had a high poetic quality, characterized by multifaceted means of composition.

The poetic skill in *hairens* is displayed by apt themes, excellent imageries in elucidating emotions, emphasizing mood and providing psychological depth to the poem.

Do not put on your sky-blue dress;
 do not bewitch me with your hands.
 Don't leave your house. I'm jealous, yes,
 that you might smile at other men.
 Your father did a lot of good,
 built bridges over gorge and canyon.

Why don't you do just one good deed
and let me be your bed companion?²⁸

The kiss, received by the minstrel at his lover's discretion as a "sweet fruit," is likened to the fruit eaten by Adam for which he was driven from Paradise, as he himself is driven from his lover's bosom.

Opulent descriptions and comparisons of the lover's prettiness are absent from *hairens*. Each line is an expressive and objectified picture where woman's beauty and charm and absorbing feeling of love, with all its variety of inspiration, is visible.

O silvery moon, your boast is bold:
 "I give the world serenity."
Yet, in my arms an earthly moon I hold;
 she's lying cheek to cheek with me.
You don't believe me? Let me lift a fold
 of my black cassock. But I fear you might
Yourself be overcome by love for her
 and give our world a feebler light.²⁹

Or:

Your eyes are like the sea at the doors of Misr;
Your hair like a sail the wind blows hither;
As a spring you overflowed; as a red apple rounded;
You are brighter than the red rose, with perfume filling the
 world.³⁰

The balladeer addresses his "sweet darling" and "sweetheart" by different names, such as "red and white face," "O my pearl string," "your bosom is a white temple," "O my little melon," "my high-flying moon," etc. Her mouth "is filled with sugar"; her bosom is "Adam's Paradise, were I to enter and pick apples"; she is a bright moon ("the moon shines under the spring down your bosom"). Such a sparkling woman is a unique and independent individual by nature, with desires and free will. She, too, seeks loves, tries to be amiable; she enters the orchard, smiles while standing at the half-open door, brings water in a jug which render her behavior natural and convincing. It is interesting

that the "oriental" approach toward woman is not present here. On the contrary, there is respect and worship toward her elegance and charm, condemning the unfaithful and immodest woman.

It is obvious that description of woman's beauty occurs in the lyricism of all peoples. Among Armenians it can be found all the way back in Narekatsi, in the tenth century, when he was writing poems about the Mother of God. Nearly all medieval Armenian balladeers have dedicated poems to woman, each eulogizing the tender sex in her external gracefulness with a certain mood. Without doubt, descriptive elements of woman's personality had penetrated literature through minstrel songs, since women had been sung in their external characteristics from ancient times in those old and new poems. In *hairens*, the woman's eyes, brows, mouth, smile, cheeks, bosom, voice, teeth, height, gait are painted and colored by expressive analogies and adjectives—a phenomenon also seen in medieval balladeers, with more lavish images. Birds with their voices, flowers with their colors, nature with its perfumes and wonders—the sun, moon, stars, lakes, seas, trees with their majesty, warmth, brightness, and colors—are comparative qualities of the young woman here: "her bosom is full of light," "you are like the pip of a pomegranate," "your eyes are from the sea and your brows from the dark cloud," "you are brighter than the red rose, filling the world with perfume," "your breath like the dust of incense," "light shines from your bosom, makes the dead come out of the ground," "your bosom is like the morn, the more I open it, the more it lights up."

Your face is like the moon, your hair like the dark night;
Your temples like the apple of paradise, your eyes are from the
 sea;
You have arching brows, dark eyes, arrow lashes;
Your mouth is tulip-colored, filled inside with pearls."³¹

In *hairens*, the display of shades of the psychology of love is multifaceted and varied—the mirth of love, joy of the encounter and the sorrow of parting, delight and torture, betrayal and disappointment.

Oh, let me drink your red cheeks' wine
 till I have had my fill.
Your breasts are the garden of Paradise,

let me pick your apples at will.
 Oh, let me rest on your snow-white breast
 and sleep there while I draw breath,
 And after an endless repose let me yield
 my soul to the Angel of Death.³²

Or:

O, night, be long, be without end;
 be, if you can, a year.
 My love has come to me tonight,
 at last I hold her near.
 O, dawn, delay, come not too soon,
 do not disturb our sport.
 The light that through my window falls
 must cut our loving short.³³

Two characters are present in *hairens*, one of whom is the author himself; the other, the loved one. It can also be viewed as a dialogue of the loving couple, where love is displayed in unrestrained feeling with a sincere and honest spirit. And, it is exactly this simplicity, free of speech adorned with ornamentation, that is effective, direct, and undisguised. And, regardless of colorfulness of the descriptions and immediacy of the confessions, at bottom the singer is controlled and far from naked and vulgar sentimentality. On the contrary, in vigorous pursuit of real life, he is even tender, naive, and good-hearted.

These *hairens*, written in folk language and spirit, are varied in their unique humor and immediate mood, in the novelty and abundance of ideas, and are far from monotony. Here, the most supreme happiness in life is enjoyment of love. Yet the minstrel is not a careless and vivacious suitor only but a suffering and afflicted individual, who is as familiar with the bright as with the dark and painful aspects of the feeling of love which gives meaning to man's life. The tragedy of love is represented in *hairens* by depiction of numerous sad and uncomfortable psychic states. In the *hairens* "The tears on my face sparkle like spring rain," "Oh, go away, you are worthless for me," "When I was young," "Where were you? Where did you come from?" the singer's heart is stirred from hurt caused by love.

Like incense has my color turned,
 like saffron is my sickly hue:
Am I at the hour of death
 or is it all from love of you?
I'm told you have a wonder cure:
 make me revive, sweet sorceress,
For if I die from love of you
 you'll be arraigned a murderess.³⁴

The profound psychological shades of *hairens* are displayed with delicate literary imagery. Even though the latter is expressed in one or two lines, it is so impressive in its concise and expressive characterization, that it reminds of a painting where there is no superfluous line, dot, or color.

That night I slept
 in my lonely bed.
My pearly skin
 moonlight-overspread.
My lover came
 to me in my dream—
I awoke—alone
 in the moonlight's gleam.³⁵

Or:

Happy the man who took his girl
 and fled the gaping throng.
They crossed the bridge; the waters swirled
 and bore the bridge along.
The snow came down; the wind blew strong;
 their tracks were soon erased.
He took her to the garden maze
 and kissed her all day long.³⁶

Emotions of unrestrained love clash with social conceptions of the times—demands of the very conservative reality. Old-fashioned

moral traditions constrict man's freedom and often destroy the enjoyment of love. And for this reason, liberal and daring folk balladeers, who had long left the mentality of backward social norms behind, were rebelling against that reality and following the suggestion of rationality and the heart. They value highly their unrestrained right to love and protest against reality and customs.

My darling love, let us suffer no longer;
 my love for you disrupts my inward peace.
 Let's leave together for another country;
 this country holds no happiness for us.
 Let's go away and stay in happier regions,
 where we can live together without fear.
 Why should we stay here, trembling and uncertain
 what blow of fate will next befall us here?³⁷

With the same consciousness of the individual's free and unselfish feeling, the minstrel condemns forced marriages, purchased love; he criticizes and satirizes clergymen enslaved to religious superstitions, defending natural human rights.

But, yesterday, on a fine day,
 I saw a girl led off by stealth,
 Snatched from her lover ruthlessly,
 by force or by the lure of wealth.
 The kind of love that's bought and sold
 merits burning at the stake:
 True love is a sweet heavenly gift
 of apples and of sugar-cake.³⁸

With their strong secular meditations, *hairens* were daring and brilliant for Armenian reality of the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries. They are closer to lyrical conceptions of our times, intimate and free, private and individual. Animated impulses of the period of secularization, in the colorful language and attitude of common, tradesmen classes reach such a height in this poetic genre, that they are far removed from peaceful and introverted medieval characterizations and acquire a restless nature.

In this literary heritage a considerably large portion consists of *hairens* dedicated to expatriation, where bitterness of the man who has resorted to *ghariputiun* (literally, "exile," adapted from the Turkish) due to hard circumstances of life, the tragedy of one who has left homeland and dear ones behind is depicted. And so strongly is sorrow of the longing exile expressed, that these songs become patriotic poems cast in the grand humanism of the poet.

I give my beloved as a trust, as a rose harbor her;
If I go and return soon, give the trust to its bequeathor;
If I go and die in exile, keep the rose and him remember.

Folk singers also wrote reflective-cautionary quatrains, where they contemplated numerous issues of the age—problems of education, dignity, diligence, and rationality. Desire for knowledge and erudition consumed the poet throughout life; and, he has a high opinion of the sage's lucid ideas and depth of intellect, while the ignorant is blind in life and "scorches wherever" he goes.

One man might be worth a thousand, and a thousand might not
be worth one.

The one worth a thousand, is not worth a dime for the
ignorant.³⁹

Counseling, in order to perfect society and man, has a place in this series, where also wickedness and betrayal, drunkenness and lying are criticized.

I took the world in my palm, looked at it as in a mirror;
Then I put it down, I could not find one to love;
I will not share bread and salt with man hence;
Since they slander so much that lies turn into truth.⁴⁰

These quatrain reflections are convictions of one who has seen and weighed the good and bad in life; the formulated conclusions of one who understands the world. In philosophical meditations on man and life, the minstrel is the child of his age. Although a certain duality perplexes him, his viewpoint on the world is stable in its spiritual-

religious ideas and Christian attitude. It was through perfection of man's essence that salvation of the soul would come; it was man's virtuous character that would sanctify him against eternal destruction. This was what his world view, eulogizing earthly love and enjoyment with its profound conceptions of humanism, was clinging to.

The world is as a sea, where men swim;
The body is as a ship, the soul incorruptible treasure;
Men, like spring flowers, blossom and then dry up;
Blessed are the just on the day of coming.⁴¹

Hairens bear the influence of folk lyricism and oral tradition, where comparisons and analogies from life or nature, figures of speech, and expressions confirm the minstrels' striking and simultaneously original poetic thinking. Yet, they achieved such perfection through use of parsimonious words and restricted style, avoiding the picturesque and satiated imagery of those precedents in Armenian medieval poetry.

The art of *hairens* is far from uniform and repetitious poetic forms, is saturated with emotionalism, and has the strange ability to impress strongly with its simplicity.

In this world, on this earth, you are a ring, I am the stone;
Where there is a spring, you are the green, I am the dew on it;
You are an apple on the tree bough, I am a small green bush;
I fear that fall would come, they would pluck you, my bush will
get dry.⁴²

The delicate sensation of nature and objects and eruptive movement of emotions are explained by immense vivaciousness. Poetic openings endowed with questions, unique appeals or expressions achieve high artistic standards with their immediacy and variety, creating colorfulness of style. Most characteristic aspect of the art of *hairens* is versatility of descriptions, imagery of the action, the ability to see and appreciate life in process.

Where were you? where did you come from? O stranger, and
loved me?
You had fire on your sleeves and poured it down my bosom;

You made your love into gold and melted it in the crucible of
my heart,
Then you made it into a ring and hung it on the ear of my
heart.⁴³

With its aesthetics and metrication, the art of these poems has left a strong influence on medieval poetry, as well as on Armenian poets of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Deeply human and moving emotions, substantiated by unique artistic methods, are read even today with profound inspiration, preserving their charm for all time.

Hairens have been translated under the name of Nahapet Kuchak into French (Arshak Chopanian, *Les Trouvères Arméniens*, Paris, 1906); German, where the translator, Hans Betge, called Kuchak the "Armenian nightingale" ("Die Armenische Nachtigall," 1924); Russian (*Naapet Kuchak, Sto i odin ayren* [Nahapet Kuchak, A Hundred and One *Hairens*], 1976) and English (Nahapet Kuchak, *A Hundred and One Hayrens*, 1979, where a Russian translation of the *hairens* is also included).

18. Bardic Lyricism

Alongside folk songs, bardic lyricism, widespread among oriental peoples, occupies a unique position; and, in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, it gave two remarkable names to Armenian literature—Naghash Hovnatan and Sayat-Nova.

Bards, "*ashugh*"s (it is the Arabic word *ashek*, which means lover), were generally illiterate or semi-literate individuals, wandering singer-poets like French troubadours, German meistersingers, Greek rhapsodes who sang in the streets, at squares, markets, or popular assemblies on their musical instruments (*tar*, *saz*, *kamancha*), often competing with each other. They were sometimes blind and, like folk singers, enjoyed the affection of upper and lower classes for centuries. Bards were more often educators, dedicated to the public, its needs and demands, time and again forgetting even the personal.

As far back as the fifth century, Khorenatsi speaks of wandering minstrels, who composed *goghtan* songs. According to Armenian historiographers, in ancient times minstrels were singers at merriments and bacchanalia who also narrated ancient fables and heroic epics, harmonizing and playing them on instruments. Those pagan songs were performed in the folk vernacular and have not reached us. Minstrel songs of love and merriment flourished especially during the Artzruni and Bagratuni kingdoms, tenth to eleventh centuries, in the ebullient atmosphere of the city of Ani, spreading to Armenia Minor and Cilicia.

Bardic art developed and spread wide in the sixteenth to seventeenth and subsequent centuries (minstrels started to be called *ashughs* from the sixteenth century). It is only from the mid-seventeenth century that bardic songs have reached us, having been created chiefly in Armenian colonies (New Julfa, Tiflis, Constantinople, Theodosia, and elsewhere).¹ Armenians cast on foreign shores had the spiritual need to tell what they witnessed and lived, their joys and sorrows. The most proper form for that was the bardic song. It had several types—among them, *mukhammadz*, *dastan*, *diubeyit*, *tejni*, *doshma*, *divani*, and *gazel*. Types of bardic songs are differentiated also according to their content.

For instance, the idea of the heroic is characteristic to songs called *keoroghli*; the religious to those called *sioni*; motifs of unfortunate and melancholic love to the type called *kearami*. And thus, with their meter and types borrowed from oriental lyricism, ancient bardic songs differ from folk songs.

The bardic poem was composed to be sung, not recited. And for that reason those songs were constructed according to the tune of the song, not the discourse. Therefore, from this viewpoint, bardic tunes differed from other poems by their metrical posture. According to Abeghian, bards, who had a considerable role in Armenian lyricism, nonetheless, did not develop Armenian metrication. Bardic songs remained unisonant tunes, remarkable by their musicality but not by variety of meters. Bards did not take into account metrical emphases of the language of the poem, the simple and complex metrical feet (iamb, anapest iambic-anapest, chorei, etc.). To them only the quantitative equivalence of syllables found in a line was important. At the end of the line there is pause, repeated regularly after a certain number of syllables. Besides that, each line of the song is parted by rhyme, a characteristic quality of bardic tunes. What is accented here is the rhyme or the word at the end of the line, while the variety of rhymes is dependent on the skill of the bard. As far as their melody is concerned, bards sung a number of songs with the same tune or borrowed tunes from other bards.

Although certain general characteristics of oriental poetry are noticeable in medieval Armenian verse, mainly in terms of representations of the rose and nightingale, or descriptions and metrication; nevertheless, that influence is not as essential as it is notably in bardic poesy. The Armenian bardic song is obviously related to Perso-Arabic literature, especially to the poetic forms, imagery, style, and metrication of minstrel songs of those peoples.

Being wanderer singers and traveling in the Middle East, bards performed and spread also non-Armenian, Turkish, and Persian love songs, stories, and fables, such as "*Keoroghli*," "*Siabento and Khaje-Zare*," "*Ashugh Gharib and Shahsanam*," "*Leili and Mejnun*," "*Rostam Zal*," "*Fahrad and Shirin*," "*Lokhman-Hekim*," etc.

The reign of Muslim tribes was also importing into Armenia the Arabic and Persian languages and culture, which spread mainly in the lower popular strata, while being altogether unacceptable to the ecclesiastical class. The clergy had its language, *grabar*, and its unique

themes. It was the secular man who was mostly going along with that current.

The influence of oriental, Islamic culture on Armenians grew strong especially after the fifteenth century, when the Armenian people, taken into captivity to Persia by Shah Abbas, came into immediate contact with the Persian language and culture. On the other hand, after the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Turks (1453) when Armenians concentrated more and more in that city, the influence of Turkish became more noticeable; while in eastern Armenia, Azerbaijani culture, songs, and music is increasingly noticeable on the Christian mentality, language, and conception of Armenians.

Bardic songs were oral creations, affected by folk oral tradition, the folk song. In reality, though, bardic songs differ from folk songs; foremost, these are personal creations and, besides being popular, reflect unique features of the bard-singer's nature and psychology; and additionally, they possess unique metrication, as well as content.

The bardic song does not have a pastoral quality as the folk song. Bards lived and performed in cities and even courts. And for this reason they represented the taste and moods of tradesmen, merchants, and the nobility, even though they sang in rural plazas and squares. And in spite of the fact that bards, as true children of their age and atmosphere, had religious viewpoints next to the secular, the church did not legitimize and provide room for minstrel songs. Like the folk tradition, these tunes were not accepted in cleric circles, and their authors were considered devils and demons: "For where the buffoonery and the minstrels exist, and lewd sports and mockery, there the demons dance amongst them."²

Armenian bards composed songs in Turkish, Persian, or Georgian also, alongside Armenian. There were bards, who performed in several languages simultaneously (Sayat-Nova, Shamchi Melkon, Hartun Oghli, Mahtesi Siruni, and others). This was viewed as a great skill and, as an artistic craftsmanship, was named "*molamma*" which meant "composite."³ And regardless of what language bardic songs were composed in, they were closely related to national life, customs, and psychology. In this sense, minstrel songs tell more of the popular mentality, taste, tendencies, and needs than contemporary historic and ethnographic material.

In the initial period this literary tradition had a reflective, cautionary character and was tied to specific historical events, invasions and deportations, natural horrors (earthquake, flood), and other phenomena. Christian conceptions in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries were still explaining all kinds of evil and disasters in the life of Armenians through circumstances of man's sinfulness. And this was reflected directly in bardic songs. Additionally, there were allegoric poems, which discussed issues of duality characteristic of the age (between spirit and body, earth and heaven) as well as tunes with purely cautionary-educational content, where bards sermonized staying faithful to Christian concepts, advised being good, noble, and industrious.

Bardic songs of love and merriment form a distinct group, bearing strong correlations with oral and written lyricism. The influence of oriental poetry is displayed in these epicurean songs, somewhat creating a monotony; because, it copies those forms of description which characterized Persian and Arabic lyricism in portraying woman's external figure. While in issues of love content where Armenian bards express their own feelings and sentiments, they exhibit an altogether unique approach and charm. In the representation of the feeling of love not even a glimmer of patriarchal naiveté is felt anymore. It reminds one of the European knight and his mistress. The minstrel is a singer of free love ties, providing an example of urban amour, and does not get confined either by class distinctions, nor by family or tribal relations. In all events, be it a song with satirical, love, historical, or civic content, bards rest upon popular taste and attitude. The reciprocal influence of folk oral tradition and bardic lyricism developed bardic poetry further in written and oral forms, producing notable figures.

Naghash Hovnatan

From Grigoris Aghtamartsi to Naghash Hovnatan remarkable figures did not appear in Armenian literature. The major and minor authors who came forth did not bring innovation with their poetic art. They were unwittingly copying medieval balladeers, although they imparted a secular spirit to medieval Armenian poetry with the themes they utilized concerning nature, love, mourning, expatriation, and satire. Among these, poetic quality found its highest expression in the work of

Naghash Hovnatan, who crystallized the traditions and techniques of Armenian poets, folk and bardic songs, in his creations. He became the singer of merriment and revelry in Armenian literature, though not as original as his successor, Sayat-Nova.

Hovnatan was born in the village of Shorot, in the Yernjak district of Siunik, in 1661. He received his education through his father, Hovhannes vardapet, then studied at the Tovma Arakial monastery school in Agulis. Being a scribe, then a deacon, he was involved in illuminating manuscripts and scrolling, and wrote poems, dedicating himself to literature and art. Nature had endowed him also with the skill of painting, for which he was called "Naghash" (Ornamentor, from Arabic). Gifted with a wonderful voice, he would sing his poems and become renowned everywhere. The fame of the painter's and singer's skills reached far, and even King Wakhtang VI of Georgia invited him to Tiflis, as court singer and painter. It is not known when Hovnatan returned to his homeland from Georgia; it is only known that he died and was buried in his birthplace, Shorot, in 1722.⁴

The poet Naghash Hovnatan, being furthermore a famous painter, illustrated books; dealt in frescoes, ornamenting the walls and cupolas of churches; did portraits, bearing the influence of Persian and Italian painting. The art of painting, learned from his father, was inherited by Hovnatan's sons, then his grandsons (Hakob, Harutjun, Hovnatan, Mkrtum, Hakob, Aghaton Hovnatanians) for nearly two hundred years, establishing the talented school of Hovnatanian painters in the history of Armenian figurative art.⁵

Approximately one hundred poems, with their variants, have survived from Hovnatan, scattered in various manuscripts and poetry books of the period. Living in an eighty-year span of peace, established after the truce of 1639, Hovnatan wrote mainly songs of love and joy, as well as religious-admonitive, social, and satirical poems. His world view is the embrace of one who has observed and understood life, not possessing the disjointedness characteristic of the medieval poet's conceptions anymore. Undoubtedly, the poet's personality has a role in this; but, also the urban atmosphere from native Shorot, Agulis to Tavriz and Tiflis, where he lived, performed, painted, and created is important.

Hovnatan's poetic character is full of secular and vivacious sentiments, humanistic tendencies, love and joy toward the world and life. There is no allegory or restraint, with which mystic medieval poets

were characterized. Life is short; therefore, one should enjoy it and benefit from all the secular good, love, and merriment. The threat of awesome judgment remains far; to have spiritual life one should atone for sins and repent. This already was the dictate of secular spirit, a wisdom free of internal contradictions which, however, believed in the idea of God and blessed Him "always and ever."

In Hovnatan's opinion, soul and body are not opposed to each other, and each has its demands that need to be satisfied. And if the medieval idea of torturing the body for salvation of the soul is removed, then the desire to enjoy life becomes imperative, since "this false world" is transitory, "man is like a dream."

The poem "I vera garnan yev urakhutian" (On Spring and Merriment) is written with the wish to enjoy nature and youth, where Hovnatan, sitting under a blossoming tree together with his friends, is drinking red wine and enjoying the merry moment of shared revelry.

When it was spring, the sun rose;
The southern wind blew and snow melted;
The earth turned green, the tree blossomed.
Let's drink, brothers, the wine,
Prepared by the Divine.

When under the blossomed tree brothers sit,
Wine, red and clear, in their hand held,
The white flower will fall in the goblet;
Let's drink, brothers, the wine,
Prepared by the Divine.⁶

Hovnatan's happy inspiration to enjoy the pleasure of living, nature, woman, and wine ("Tagh urakhutian seghano" [Ode on the Banquet Table], "Tagh bun Barekendanin" [Ode on Shrovetide], "Tagh urakhutian" [Ode on Merriment], etc.) is animated, immediate, and is reminiscent of Khayyam in its idea of vanity and psychology of experiencing the benefits of ephemeral life ("Tagh urakhutian i vera seghano" [Ode on Merriment at the Banquet]).

My table is full of good;
All kinds of sweet wine,

Lamb, fowl, and pilaf;
 Today is a day of merriment;
 Put the goblets in a circle.

My table is full of supplies,
 Brothers sitting in order,
 Like a pearl-rimmed crown;
 Today is a day of merriment;
 Put the goblets in a circle.⁷

But with whatever desire he loves life and enjoyment, he seeks man's spiritual perfection, kindness, nobleness, peace, and decency with the same force. His strong tendency to enjoy the benefits of the world is intact and clean, because it is not a praise or eulogy of bacchanalia but a harmony of the beauty of nature and purity of the human soul, an appreciation of secular and spiritual sentiments, where the secular sometimes yields to spiritual inspiration. Man should remove rancor, intransigence, and jealousy from his soul and go towards reconciliation. Since he is born good, he should, therefore, maintain that purity and be amiable towards all. He should be able to be happy with a sincere heart, able to share the good with everybody so banquets of merriment can bring "love and festivity."

Human friendship and love are the chief factors, the noble wish of having and enjoying which renders Hovnatan so animated and bon-vivant ("Yegaik aisor zhoghovetsek ..." [Come Today Together ...]).

Come today together, good friends,
 To sit at the table in decency, cherished brothers;
 Joyfully have love and festivity,
 Happily and laughing
 Let's drink the wine rejoicing.⁸

Hovnatan is mainly a singer of love; his best works, more than thirty in number, are love songs. Some of them are "Horzham yeghev garun" (When It Was Spring), "Urakhutian zkez govem, patker goveli" (I Praise Thee In Joy, Dear Image), "Geghetsik patker is" (Thou Art a Beautiful Sight), "Lusni nman paitzar yeres boloratz" (Bright Like the Moon a Rounded Face), "Usti ku gas kaghtsr belbul" (Where Dost Thou

Come From Sweet Blbul?), "Amen aravot ku gas tzaghknerov" (Each Morning Thou Come With Flowers), "Yek genamk paghchen" (Come, Let's Go to the Orchard), "Nor tzaghketsav aigin" (The Orchard Just Blossomed), and "Im yarn nstel damov" (My Love, Sitting Happily). Many of these tunes find a place in popular repertoires even today. His poem "Tagh i vera Gurjestana gozalnerin" (Ode On the Beauties of Georgia), which is sung until today, inspired Sayat-Nova to write his famous song "Kani vur jan im" (As Long As I Live).

Hovnatan is a merry, bon-vivant individual, formed by a mixture of light and smile, whose songs are not rejected and shattered feelings, but a free and burning wonderful worship, the chirping of a happy lover. There is a limpid simplicity and brightness in his songs, unconstrained emotions and thoughts, which are characterized by their inner freedom and sincerity. Hovnatan is considered a singer of love, since his philosophy of the enjoyment of life combined wine, woman and nature, although in his banquet odes woman is absent, since the latter could not participate in revelry due to oriental tradition.

His paramour is a simple and picturesque sight, endowed with all the good qualities—beauty, a face sparkling like a rose, sweet tongue, gracious smile. She is perfumed like a flower, her eyes "bullion moon, your brows arches" ("Where Dost Thou Come From ...").

Where dost thou come from, sweet blbul?
Hail to thee, I am thine servant;
Thine tongue sherbet, thine hair hyacinth,
Give me some water with thine sweet tongue.

They say thine sight is matchless;
I don't have any hope but thou;
What would I care for a thousand *tumans*,
When thou becomst my darling?

Thine whole face is as embroidered;
I am left amazed and enraptured;
Pity me, o thou, pitiless,
How much are thou to torture me?

The rose opened in the morning;

Thou are the gem of the beauties;
 He who falls into thine fires
 Wouldst no more be blaming me.

Thou hast dark hair, lined brows;
 Whatever thou wear wears well;
 When with thine sea eyes thou wink,
 Thou pierce me with a sharp knife.⁹

Woman's exterior image has the same colors we encounter with other medieval balladeers. Except here woman is more alive and vivacious, seen with all her beauty, surroundings, and manners. She is loved; she loves, writes letters, sends greetings, pursues her love. The immediacy imparts color and fragrance and, at the same time, warmth to his love songs because of which those tunes infuse the reader with their vitality. There is not a glimmer of mysticism here. Hovnatan's mental horizon is bright and imbued with the mood to enjoy pleasure. His love is not dreamy nor a feeling turned to worship, as with early medieval Armenian balladeers (*Bright Like a Moon ...*).

Bright like the moon a rounded face,
 I was left longing for thine embrace;
 Thine hair weaved as golden thread,
 I am left longing to give it back.

Thine brows have arched in fire,
 Thine eyes burn as a bright lamp,
 Alas, thou are covered in thin veil;
 I am left longing to behold them.

The melons of thine bosom are very ripe;
 I fear they'll wither; don't stay forbidden;
 If thou do not betroth me, be thou punished;
 I am left longing to fondle them.¹⁰

And sometimes Hovnatan has expressed sad and sorrowful feelings which, however, have been understood as expressions of happiness and joy (*I Praise Thee in Joy ...*).

I praise thee in joy, O beautiful sight,
 O my, O my, thou are so sweet, dear beloved;
 Thine red cheeks as a mirror shine,
 O my, O my, thou are so bright, ray of the sun.

Thine face shines and sparkles like a rose,
 Mine eyes are amazed, and my heart is atremble,
 Thine bosom a sea, my hands birds, to swim there;
 O my, O my, I praise thee with a content soul.¹¹

Nature is always present in the poet's love songs, especially spring with its blossoming and awakening elements, blooming trees and flowers. He invites his beloved to the orchard at spring time—a beloved who compliments the charm of spring with her grace (“Asel es, te ...” [Thou Hast Said]).

Thou hast said, “In the spring-time,
 When the rose in our orchard opens,
 I will show thee the gem of my bosom;
 Come to the orchard; this is the best time ...”¹²

Hovnatan is a simple and happy individual who does not have internal contradictions nor the kind of variety and originality of moods and inspirations that his successor, Sayat-Nova, has. His soul is opened to the world, wherefrom only love and happiness flow. “Hovnatan's poetry cannot be compared with Kuchak's,” writes Chopanian, referring to *hairens*, adding: “It does not have an ethnic originality as that one; like Sayat-Nova, Hovnatan is also imbued by the influence of Persian and Turkish poetry, and however much the Armenian accent is felt deep inside, many elements from Islamic aesthetics enter its form. Hovnatan also does not possess Kuchak's variety of inspiration, novelty and opulence of ideas, supreme compactness and delicacy of style, vigor of emotion, charming inventions of expression.”¹³

In general mood and even in idioms and attitude, Hovnatan's love songs are very close to *hairens* and folk minstrel romances, yet bear an oriental, Persian influence. Where *hairens* and folk romances were

diverse in their contents, actions, vigorous figures, and utilized a variety of poetic forms and meters, Hovnatan's love songs, being individual creations, are uniform, descriptive, yet captivating in their vivaciousness.

Hovnatan also wrote satirical and cautionary songs, which are not of a high quality (numbering approximately thirty-five), where he ridiculed the defective and ludicrous aspects existing in life and manners, sometimes in simplistic and at others considerably strong satire. "Ov Shahvertunts ter Abraham" (O Master Abraham of the House of Shahvert), "Kamik govel duk Yerevan" (You Wish to Praise Yerevan), "Katun merav, apsos u vakh" (The Cat is Dead, Alas and Woe), "Ter Astvatzatur ints asats mi ban" (Father Astvatzatur Said Something to Me), "Zatkin hayots" (At Armenian Easter), and other songs with comic titles are some of these poems. In cautionary poems he instructs to love science and art, to defend rights of the deprived, criticizing deceit and sycophancy. His satirical tunes are closely related with folk-minstrel songs, in imitation of which he utilized folk idioms and styles, proverbs and sayings ("*khelki kchuch*" [brain pot], "*namus gheirat*" [honor-dignity], "*khozn inch gite margarti sharn*" [what does the swine know of the pearl string], and "*voch nkates achatset geran, ailots ases, te shiught han*" [you don't notice the log in your eye, and tell others to remove their straw]). Refrains were extensively used in Hovnatan's songs. This was one of the elements of medieval poetic art, the form of poetic craft in refrain lines, refrain halves, or refrain words, utilized as far back as in Hovhannes Tlkurantsi's, Kostandin Yerznkatsi's, Grigoris Aghtamartsi's songs. With Hovnatan, the last lines and couplets of the quatrain, often individual lines or words, are repeated. For example:

I thine admirer,
Thou a roe-deer.

Or:

Let's drink, brothers, the wine,
Prepared by the Divine.

Other examples are on the line "Hey, Darling, O My," the words "charming," "pretty," etc. Hovnatan's language is a mixture of Eastern and Western Armenian and *grabar* forms, his metrication is simple and regular (especially in love songs), utilizing the most ancient meters of Armenian poesy. His poems are written in quatrains, which often have refrains and consist of seven, eight, nine, eleven, fifteen (sometimes sectioned, sometimes not) syllabic lines.

His poetic vocabulary is selective and pleasing, creating a musical and metrical harmony, since they were composed with the aim of also being sung. Refrains have a role in imparting musicality and fluency, which emphasize feeling and render the poem emotional. Hovnatan's eye-catching quality is picturesqueness, as if the bard-poet has executed his graphic skills in creating colorful oriental images.

A considerable portion of Hovnatan's poems are written with the craftsmanship of bardic art. And even though he is not an organized and definitively formed bard, he has left a considerable influence on the development of bardic lyricism. Hovnatan wrote bardic songs which were performed also in Persian and Turkish.

Sayat-Nova

The fusion of bardic tradition and folk creation reached unprecedented development with the greatest eighteenth century bard-poet Sayat-Nova, who took the simple bardic song to heights of poetic art. He appropriated from the art of minstrelsy the metrical forms of his songs (as his poems were called), while from folk tradition, the oral treasures—language and techniques of imagery.

He has been written about for more than a hundred years, his songs and art analyzed, the man Sayat-Nova studied, his biography scrutinized, jubilees mounted.¹⁴ He has turned into some kind of an epic figure with his magical songs, depth of feeling, tragicality of life, and inexhaustible and burning love. Until today his songs adorn Armenian banquets and console people. No bard has as yet had the popularity his songs have achieved, favored by all classes.

Sayat-Nova was born and raised in Tiflis, between the years 1712-1722. His real name was Arutin.

His father, Karapet, was from Aleppo, while his mother, Sara, from Havlabar (one of the quarters of Tiflis). Arutin's father was a *mahtesi* (pilgrim to Jerusalem) and he probably was involved in his son's education; or, perhaps (according to some studies) he received training in the Sanahin monastic school. At the age of twelve he learned weaving and even invented an apparatus, with which it was possible to loom and work at home, indoors, and not in the street. But the gifted lad's real calling was different. Destined from up high, he had a talent which steadily blossomed in the vibrant and jovial atmosphere of Tiflis. In 1742, at around the age of twenty, he abandoned weaving and followed the voice of his heart, which had a lot to tell the world. Arutin the weaver became a bard, sang and created, with the name of Sayat-Nova (*Sayat* means hunter, *Nova* means melody, that is, a hunter of melodies). His musical and poetic skills were soon apparent; he composed poems, sang and performed not only in Armenian but also in Georgian and Azerbaijani. The fact is, more than a century before Sayat-Nova, Islamic tyranny, under Turkish and Persian rulers, reigned in Georgia. Persian and Turkish customs, manners, language, songs, and music were appreciated not only in Georgian but also Armenian circles living in Georgia (in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries Armenians formed a large number there). That is why Sayat-Nova started his career with Turkish (Azerbaijani) or Georgian songs, while he sang Armenian later, at age thirty, when he was an already established authority. Of his songs, 232 have survived—sixty-six are in Armenian, thirty-six in Georgian, one hundred twenty-five in Azerbaijani, and five in mixed languages. Of these, all the ones in Georgian have been translated into Armenian, while from the Azerbaijani, sixty-five. In the singer's handwritten copy-book, *Davtar*, which survives to this day, the oldest song is written in 1742—the Azerbaijani song starting with the line "Precious pearl and coral of the sea." It is after 1745 that he started to write and sing in Armenian.

Sayat-Nova was the first to compose and sing Georgian songs in the forms and tunes of Persian poetry, for which he was invited to court and became Irakle II's court cantor. Sayat-Nova became well-known everywhere, achieved fame by singing in three languages and drawing the minstrel music of the aforementioned peoples together.

It is not certain when he entered and how long he stayed in the Georgian court, which was in Telav, outside Tiflis. According to studies,

that should have taken place between the years 1744-1755, approximately a decade (or perhaps until 1759), during which Sayat-Nova was in the palace and amazed the court with the art of his music and upright personality. Here he fell in love with Irakle's sister, Anna Batonishvili, and this became crucial for him.

The reasons that provoked Sayat-Nova to leave the palace are not known. One thing is clear, that he was dissatisfied with that environment and was persecuted or perhaps expelled. According to some opinions, it was because of the love for Anna that he was driven from court. "With the sign of shame on my forehead I endured the affront of the crowd," he wrote about himself.

And though Sayat-Nova spoke favorably of Irakle II, the selfish and conceited court community scorned, slandered, and plotted against him. Sayat-Nova tried to resist, to vindicate himself, and appealed to Irakle and asked him not to believe in those intrigues, by writing the famous song "You Are Wise By Far" addressed to him.

You are wise by far, your mind with the fool's put not,
With that which is seen in dreams confuse us not,
I am already scorched, all over again burn me not,
You are bored, I see; for that, others blame not.

There is no judge as you, Zal of Rostom, my liege,
Your race praised of races, you are glorious, my liege,
If I have such an offense, have my head cut, my liege,
For the sake of God, your ire in vain spend not. (p. 20)¹⁵

Leaving the court in the late 1750s, Sayat-Nova became a priest, being renamed Ter Stepanos; and, when his wife Marmar passed away in 1768, he was ordained a friar at the prelacy of the Haghat See, which was in Tiflis in those years due to brigandage in the open countryside. In 1778, when the Monastery of Haghat was rebuilt by Irakle, the order moved there. Ter-Stepanos left his four children (Hovhannes, Melikset, Sara, and Mariam) in Tiflis and together with the monks settled in Haghat and became sacristan of the St. Nshan Monastery. In September, 1795, Agha-Mahmed khan of Persia invaded Transcaucasia, pilfering and massacring the people. Learning of this, Sayat-Nova

hurried to his children in Tiflis and was murdered there on September 11, 1795.

The life that the bard-singer led was full of ups and downs, from the weaver's loom to the splendor of court and from there to the monk's dark cell, the friar's black sack-cloth instead of the red palace gown. And all of these, with the passionate and chilling feelings of encouragement and disappointment, sharpened Sayat-Nova's perceptiveness and, with keen insight characteristic of him, are reflected in the world of his own emotions. And greatest among those emotions was the feeling of love, which he wanted to embrace, to drift away with, to enjoy and forget the gloom of reality.

Generally, the theme of love is the most prominent and attractive in bardic lyricism. With Sayat-Nova, however, beside external qualities resembling the bardic, there is a vast advantage. That is his philosophical mind, depth of thought, with its immeasurable human essence. This elevates him from conceptions of the age and brings him nearer to modern times—not only joyful descriptive verses of emotions in vivid colors but also boundless breadth of intellect, with the full realization of bardic art. This depth is more characteristic of his love songs, each of which is a matchless gem, while the author is as gifted a performer-composer as he is a talented poet.

No woe shall I feel in this world, as long as you are life for me;
You are a golden goblet brimming with immortal water for me;
Sitting, you shade me; a gold-threaded silk tent you are for me;
Learn my crime, then kill me; Sultan and Khan you are for me.

Your waist cypress-plane, your feel like frankish satin is,
Your lips candy, teeth pearly are, your tongue sweet is;
Your eyes are gemmed cups, as enamel set in gold is;
A precious, priceless jewel, a ruby you are for me.

How can I endure this grief? Have I a stony heart?
My head is unbrained, you turned my tears to blood,
Fenced with roses, you are a garden in an orchard;
Would that I perch there as biulbiul, a lovely sight you are for
me.

Your love has made me drunk; awake am I, my heart asleep is;
The world had enough of itself, my heart from you starved is;
Love, how can I praise you? In this world naught else is;
Out of the sea, fiery Pegasus and gazelle you are for me.

Why not speak to me once, if Sayat-Nova's love you are?
Your blaze has caught the world, splendid as the sun you are;
Fragrant cardamom, clove, cinnamon, rose, violet, soussamber
you are,
The rose of the plain, lily of the valleys you are for me. (p. 37)

No boundaries are recognized in the adoration of the loved one; praise and ornamentation are not spared; emotions are not constrained. Like an inexhaustible spring he flows endlessly, endowing his paramour with matchless beauty. Gallantly, he humbles his masculine ego, and confesses the power of his feeling freely and unimpeded. Humiliation of the male to become worthy of the loved one was an acceptable form in oriental minstrel songs. Woman was venerated, put on a pedestal, anointed with a thousand and one colors, and turned into a kind of graphic portrait. Sayat-Nova followed this principle similarly. He burns in his love —neither the doctor nor anybody else except his beloved can help him. In the whole world, his paramour is the one and only with her beauty and grace, flavor and fragrance.

The world over traveled I, even to Abyssinia, my dear;
Not a sight as you did I see, you surpass all, my dear;
Wearing rags or muslin, you turn it into silk, my dear;
And that is why whoever sees you says "O, O," my dear.

A precious jewel you are, whoever gets you blessed is;
Who finds you suffer will not, woe unto who loses you is;
Alas, early deceased, whosoever bore you lustrous is;
If alive, would that she bore a handiwork as you, my dear.
(p. 51)

The song "Kani vur jan im" (As Long As I Am Alive) is a glorious romance where, drunk with the spirit of pleasure, the singer invites his paramour to the *baghcha* (vineyard) and sings her praises on

the *saz*. It is spring, the time of the enchantment of love, "The nightingale at the rose, the rose in the orchard; it is time to sport." The charm of springtime nature and the lover's unduplicatable image fuse together and love blossoms:

Slender cypress bough, silk, many a satin and mantle wear you;
 I would die for the pail whence for me the cup will be filled by
 you;
 Your Sayat-Nova will be cut to pieces in the grove by you.
 Come to the grove daintily, on the *saz* I sing you, my love,
 imploringly. (p. 44)

Here, as with medieval Armenian romancers, nature is fused with man, his love and feelings, with its sumptuous springtime.

Full is the orchard
 With hyacinth and lily,
 Wandering nightingale.
 The grove opulent,
 Nightingale dormant
 On the rose shrubbery.

Regardless of this, and a few other scattered depictions, nature does not occupy an essential space in Sayat-Nova's songs, nonetheless. Sometimes one happens on separate elements, rose and nightingale, flowers and sea, but still, these do not have a place in the turbulent world of his thoughts and feelings. Sayat-Nova's heart and soul are captured solely by one issue—his great love; a love, that did not bring him happiness enough to see and feel nature with its shades and fragrances in his songs. Happiness and enjoyment would have thrown him into the wonders of nature.

Instead, Sayat-Nova notices ornaments and splendor his beloved is surrounded by—precious stones, satin, and silk. His love was a dream, and a sad dream at that, where the colors and gleams of living nature were not present. And however much the bard depicts the woman he loves in colorful comparisons, nevertheless, she does not come alive. Anna remains like a beautiful picture and not a real woman, unrecognizable and unknown to the reader. It is Sayat-Nova's feelings

which are communicated to the audience; it is the author's misery that becomes recognizable and, through that misery, the unfortunate singer but not his paramour. The woman—life, priceless gem, spring of immortal love; woman—miracle and a thousand and one analogies and characterizations:

Golden words, precious gems, ruby and jewel wear you;
Just one love inflamed you, but O, how many have you.

Or:

Like a painting, you make your figure many a tone;
Behind your shade of hair the cheek mole is hidden;
Opened as a red rose, with the blbul you rhyme on;
Your teeth the gold, your lips are the touchstone.

Like a new moon, your pretty face gets rounded;
Without water or plaiting your hair gets tressed;
So he who sees you from his path gets misled;
Entering the banquet, with funny jokes you sing on.

Rose, violet, hyacinth, and lily your bosom you have made;
What need for the grove, your scent basil you have made;
With wind blowing through, your hair a sail you have made;
The world a sea, you, a boat in it, rocking go on.

With the world praising you, it would not be enough e'en then;
A white water lily, a violet to the breeze opened;
How can I suffer your love? Let by flood Sayat-Nova be driven;
Whoever sees you once more, you turn into a crazy one. (p. 7)

Although colorful images of the beloved and modulations of the emotions often have external similarity, still there is considerable internal variety in the experience of love. At times it is scorching and passionate; at others tender, dreamy, expectant. Sometimes the shades grow thick, another time soft, but always remain harmonious with the thought.

Praise of woman's body, occupying a large space in oriental poetry generally, the analogies and adjectives, with which he adorns his *amorosa*, are the price to bardism. Bards as well as medieval Armenian balladeers sang and described their beloveds' beauty in this manner. It was a general feature. Thus he was paying tribute to the times and becoming less personal. His individuality is in the pain of love, his longing, hopelessness, and in the tribulations of his inflamed soul. Of course, as a bard he is similar to his predecessors, and yet so original, that he is considered not only a bard but also a poet.

His poetic songs, torn from the heart, seeming to burn from the intensity of emotion, leave the impression that Sayat-Nova seems to have addressed all of his love songs to one woman only, that he knew and loved only one and was smitten by only one. He felt very deeply the bitterness of unrequited love, realized the social differences between himself and the woman he loved, and experienced great disappointment. He befriends the wandering nightingale and cries together with him.

Where do you come from, strange blbul?
Do not cry now, because I will;
You seek the rose, I the dear girl;
Do not cry now, because I will.

Come my blbul, speak so sweetly,
May where you come from blessed be;
The rose burned you, my lover me;
Do not cry now, because I will.

I go about with the captivated,
As with a thorn the displaced blbul would;
You with your rose, I with my beloved;
Do not cry now, because I will. (p. 19)

The woman he loved remained inaccessible and unapproachable. Only from a distance was he charmed by her, seared and consumed, deprived even from the right to meet and talk to her. The space separating the bard from the royal princess is profoundly visible to Sayat-Nova.

I know, my love, that I do not merit you,
You are sovereign, I am a poor dervish...

And even though he was hopeful that the power of love could shatter even ramparts, yet the atmosphere he lived in crushed everything and, tortured and wounded, he rebelled against fate:

Everyone says, "Alas for your state, Sayat-Nova,
Each time we see your eyes bloody, Sayat-Nova,
How could you not find a good love, Sayat-Nova?"
My life a dream, my tree was fruitless, know you. (p. 75)

As a singer of love, Sayat-Nova's tunes are unlike *hairens* or Naghash Hovnatan's songs. Those other authors were more fortunate; they loved woman with a pagan ardor and enjoyed her with insatiable passion. Sayat-Nova's love did not make him happy; it was like a bottomless sea, always turbulent. His soul, too, like the waves of that sea, is flung from shore to shore, ebbs and swells again, but never calms down. Whether the love was reciprocated or one sided, in either case he was ill-starred since it was inaccessible. And however much love is strong and desire great, the lover's eulogy does not turn into concupiscence, idolatry. Sayat-Nova is restrained and even shy; he does not have lusty verses and emotional descriptions of open and pagan love, as existed in folk *hairens* and with Hovnatan. His poetic line, though, is powerful with his irruptive rush and depth of emotion.

Even the deluge would not quench the crucible of my heart;
For the sake of God, do not come near; it burns; its load is fire.

Characterizing the emotional intensity and literary quality of his love songs written in three languages, Morus Hasratian, who labored long years on the poet's heritage, wrote: "In Georgian and Azerbaijani, Sayat-Nova stands before us as a loving and emotional, noble and immediate, sagacious and moralist bard-poet, as one of the very gifted and always dear poets not to be forgotten in time. Whereas in Armenian, he is matchless in his immediacy and simplicity, unique in his delicacy and colorfulness, exceptional in harmony of soul and mind, eye and

speech—an artless, captivating magician, eternally beating warm heart, a real folk genius.”¹⁶

In spite of being a bard, Sayat-Nova the royal musician rarely wrote banquet songs. The “*dar* and *dard*” (distress and sorrow) did not allow him to be happy at revelries, in the milieu of court society. The depressing burden of life and customs suffocated the singer, forcing him to speak and protest incessantly, struggle for the nobleness and righteousness of man, and for the exaltation of his feelings.

To love man, praise the good—this was Sayat-Nova the bard’s principle in life. He wished to serve the people with his song and *kamancha*, gladdening sad hearts, stopping even “the shiver of the sick,” promising that “As long as Sayat-Nova is alive, you will see much, *kamancha*.” Yet, not long after, the voice of the *kamancha* is silenced altogether, and songs in the last pages of *Davtar* turn gloomy and wary. In all gravity he stands facing the evidence of the vanity of life. His age, experience, misery, thoughts, and judgments are universalized, while the meditations on body and soul sharpened. “The world will not be ours, so what profit is it to stay?”; splendor is meaningless, joy is temporary, while the social order and relationships are unjust.

No true, just faith is left,
That is why my heart is in pieces...

Or:

Whoever they see in old clothes,
They no more ask, who is this?

The lack of justice exhausted Sayat-Nova; in as much as his loved one tormented him with her inaccessible silence, the era agonized him with its customs and conceptions and its antipodal attitudes. Like a persecuted wandering nightingale, he tired of all—his times, his beloved as well as the interminable struggle. And in 1795, when he had already left the court, he wrote:

The world is a window, weary of markets am I,
Who gives a damn is hurt, weary of griefs am I;
Yesterday better than today, weary of morrows am I;

Not always is one the same, weary of games am I. (p. 70)

Neither is the “*khiv*” (that is, the crazy) admonished by punishment, nor the evil turns to good, nor black to white. In vain are the advice, the counsels to be kind, just, and true. One should follow the holy commandments only, since “even if you learned, knew the beautiful trove of the stars.... The evil deed is condemned forever....” Sayat-Nova “the servant of people,” who used to show “good vassalage,” offers sweet candy for the bile given to him, advises to study lives of the ancestors, the gospel, the sayings of which are pearls and should not be cast to the swine.

Good is the man, who does the will
of the kind angels readily;
The scent and taste of this world
the sages could not see.

Disappointment from life is complete, and consoled, he clings to the idea of spiritual salvation, although the duality of desires of the soul and body accompany him to the end.

Show good vassalage, servant of people, Sayat-Nova;
Not every one can grab a choice prey, Sayat-Nova;
Who gives you bile, give him candy, Sayat-Nova;
Do not let them break your vessel, Sayat-Nova.

Even at school, a pad will not the crazy wisen;
As long as inside a man, still sturdy is the demon;
The mean won't be noble, nor soda the black whiten;
A roller the stick won't unbend, weaver Sayat-Nova. (p. 53)

The spread and depth of the poet's soul was an exceptional phenomenon for his times and community, against whose persecutions he had to defend himself with the full cognizance of dignity that truly,

Not every one can drink, my water is of a different make,
Not every one can read, my writing is of a different make.

My grounds are not of sand, they are hard of rocky material
make;

Like an undrying flood, to obliterate it hasten not. (p. 20)

Sayat-Nova's poetic art relies upon techniques and forms of bardic and folk lore. He wrote his Armenian songs in the Tiflis dialect, utilizing folk words and terms, sayings, and idioms, exhibiting considerable flexibility in the usage of language. With him, the word has more meanings than one. While situations and action are expressed in brief terms, the richest vocabulary is put into circulation in all its splendor for eulogizing. The "golden cup" lover is represented in a thousand and one images and analogies, which are descriptive innovations and testify to the sensitivity of his poetic imagination. Such examples are: "Your eyes are gemmed cups, as enamel set on gold," "Drawn of the sea of love, ruby and jewel is my burden," "The world had enough of itself, my heart from you starved is," "Your blaze has caught the world, splendid as the sun are you," "The world a sea, you a boat in it, rocking go on."

The *amorosa's* waist, color, eyes, tongue, lips, teeth are matchless edifices, like pearl and candy, satin and plane tree. Beauty of the Orient in all its finery is present here. But no matter how notable his skill in language, colorful, varied in the types of analogies, nonetheless, Sayat-Nova's poetic charm lies in his ability to construct images. The emotion which he invests in each line turns into an expressive picture which has sense, mood, and logic, often becoming a proverb and characterization. As much as the inventive mix of words is charming, embellished, and colorful, still it is the power of the thought that makes a great impression and not the magnificence of language or imagination.

Sayat-Nova has a profuse rational aptitude which flows incessantly, all the time. And when one is reminded that the bard composed the words and music of his songs impromptu, right there in the banquet hall during the period of revelry, then the profoundness of the wealth of his intellect seems astonishing.

Would that my whole life, my day a favor need not;
Even with a thousand griefs, a medicine need not;
Would that I meet the good, and to the bad left not;
Staying away from evil, reproachable be not;

Would that being kind, my self obliged be not.

From far, profit for minds have I brought;
Case full of gems, the jeweler fear have I brought;
Precious wares out of India here have I brought;
Such an unseen and strange loom have I brought;
Would that I get a shop, and forever need not. (p. 27)

Folklore penetrated all corners of the singer's art, system of language, and aesthetic pictures. Idioms, styles, fresh images of atmosphere and manners, as well as epithets, refrains, proverb-sayings, figurative terms from oral traditions, and folk songs utilized by the bard-poet gave flavor to the Armenian dialect of Tiflis. For example: "Blood clotted in my heart," "I am bedeviled by your love," "my eyes are watery waiting for you," "the world over traveled I." The same is true in his forms of creating poetic pictures when analogies, exaggerations, parallels, techniques of personification, allegory, union of superb and elegant words become raw material for the construction of image, giving character to the figure and visibility to descriptions.

No matter what kind of wind, sand from the sea will not diminish;
Were I alive or were not, *saz* from banquets will not diminish;
If I am missed, only by you; no hair from earth will diminish;
Sayat-Nova's grave to Hind, Habash, or Arabia scatter not.
(p.20)

Persian songs, language, traditional heroes of Persian literature—Rostam Zal, Skandari Zulgharii (Alexander the Macedonian), Fhrad and Shirin, Leyli and Mejnun, Khosrov Parviz; historical figures—Shah Abbas and Nadir Shah, Timur Lenk, Georgian kings Irakle and Georgi; Azerbaijani poet Nasimi, and many others have provided an underlined oriental color to Sayat-Nova's bardic temperament.

Sayat-Nova utilized the technique of refrain under the influence of Naghash Hovnatan and eastern poetry, aiming to emphasize mood or enhance the musicality of the song. In his song "You are crying with the blbul," the couplet "There is no other like you" is repeated, flowing from

the content of the quatrain and complimenting it. Or the "Do not cry now, because I will" refrain in the poem "Where do you come from, strange blbul?"

He wrote the *gazel* in sixteen syllables, or fifteen, as the song "No woe shall I feel in this world," also utilizing simple, regular metrical feet characteristic of folk tunes. For example:

Shamamniret taghi mechen
Man is gali baghi mechen ...
Mejlisneru khaghen dun is,
Vankerumen taghen dun is ...
Sayat-Novu baghen dun is.

Your bosom under the arch,
 Through the garden you march ...
 The tune of the mejlis are you,
 The hymn of the church are you ...
 Sayat-Nova's orchard are you. (p. 43)

Ancient Armenian balladeers, minstrel-bards, especially Hovnatan, and Persian metricalization with its forms have contributed considerably to Sayat-Nova's art. Yet, his innate talent welded all these by the intense emotions and individuality of his "I" and left the mark of his virtuosity on each line of the poem, emerging not only as an artist-poet but also a musician-composer.

Sayat-Nova's language is simple and clear. Although the singer is frugal with his words, he is direct with the power of his mind, extravagant in his intellect, and known as a "temple of thought." Writing in folk language, he often used Persian, Arabic, and Turkish words. And in order to make the poem musical, he gives melodiousness to the discourse, creating puns, especially through rhymes and rhythm. In this sense, minstrel artistry put its stamp on his songs, metrical techniques, and rhyming methods. Following the types of bardic versification, Sayat-Nova favored the *mukhammaz*¹⁷ most, as well as the *gazel*, *tejni*, *rubayi*, *beyt*, *bayati*, etc. In his Armenian songs, most of the *mukhammazes* are written in the 4+4+4+4 meter and sometimes in the 5+5+5 meter, as in

Kani vur jan im,
Yar, ki ghurban im,
 Aba inch anim:
Artasunk anim,
Shad hoguts hanim,
 Yar, ghadet tanim;
Asir: "jeiran im,"
Tugh ki seir anim,
 Yar, metik anim.
Mut baghchen nazov,
Kiz govim sazov,
 Yar, iltimazov.

As long as I am alive,
 Love, for you I would die,
 What else could I do?
 My tears I will shed,
 And will sigh a lot,
 Love, I will ache for you;
 You say, "I am a gazelle,"
 Allow me to gaze,
 Love, and listen to you.
 Come to the grove daintily,
 On the *saz* I sing you,
 Love, imploringly. (p. 84)

Musicality is one of the chief characteristics and advantages of Sayat-Nova's heritage. As moving as he is as a poet, he is equally charming as a multilingual singer and musician. Regretfully, the melodies of many of his songs have been forgotten in time. But those that have survived have a unique musicality and carry the listener in surprising contagiousness to the genuine world of the singer's feelings and infect with the same sentiments.¹⁸ The sincerity and freshness of emotions is effective even today, and that is why his songs get performed everywhere, and Sayat-Nova remains the dear singer for all Armenian classes.

One thing is notable, however—that Sayat-Nova considered sense of the poetic line as primary and never yielded that in the name of

melodiousness. At incongruencies, he found it necessary to change versification and so introduced immense innovation into that field through dialogues and composing songs by playing on letters of the alphabet.

The brilliant Hovhannes Tumanian wrote,

He is not a new form, not a fashion which in time would bore and change. Whoever has heard him once, on second hearing will like him even more and having once understood and liked him, will never forget. In a beautiful shape, he is a fiery burning soul, a kind and full heart, a dear powerful spirit which, like the dear spirit of our land, will always sing among the peoples of the Caucasus, the Armenian, the Georgian, as well as the Turk; because, he sang powerfully in Armenian, Georgian, as well as Turkish in equal measure.¹⁹

Sayat-Nova occupies a place also in the history of Georgian and Azerbaijani literatures. He was first to make the Persian and solely palatine bardic into native Georgian, nationalizing songs which had been performed in Persian for a hundred years continually.²⁰ The bard-singer was one of the most authoritative poets of Georgia, leaving his influence on Georgian writers of the second half of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth (Besika [Gabashvili], Alexander Chavchavadze, Grigol Orbeliani, and others).

19. Armenian Poetry in the Eighteenth Century

The eighteenth century is known in the history of Armenian culture as a period of renovation and restoration, a transitory bridge from medievalism to modern times. The seventeenth century educational-cultural movement had imparted literature with nationalistic ideas and patriotic sentiments, which spread and matured further in growing networks of printing, schools, translational endeavor, and incipient press during the eighteenth century. The progress of Armenian awareness in literature was noticeable chiefly in verse which, due to Naghash Hovnatan, Sayat-Nova, Petros Ghapantsi, Paghtasar Dpir, and others was introducing new ideas and new qualities of art.

Beginning with the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, Armenian poetry was proceeding not only in folk and bardic branches but also individual (in contrast to the orally transmitted). These differed from each other by their techniques and content and developed along altogether unique paths. The eighteenth century written-individual poetry carried traditions of ancient and medieval Armenian poesy directly and was composed in *grabar*.

Armenian poetry, which had been written in Middle Armenian from the twelfth to eighteenth centuries, drew near *grabar* again after the eighteenth century, not with the intention of reviving ecclesiastical mentality but due to the demands of the time. What were those demands?

The severe political conditions under which Armenians were living during the long-lasting Turkish and Persian reigns had not only dimmed their intellect but also distorted their language. In the twelfth to eighteenth centuries a large quantity of Arabic, Turkish, and Persian words had slipped into the Armenian language; Turkish-speaking bards had come forth and an Armenographic Turkish literature had been created. This situation had brought Armenian language and culture to the brink of extreme decline. Yet, so vigilant was the nationalistic spirit of

these people clinging to their traditions for centuries, that Armenians found ways to revive what belonged to them. And now awareness of motherland, nationhood, and Church thrust forward the simplified and easily comprehensible Armenian classical language, *grabar*. Eighteenth-century poets Paghtasar Dpir, Petros Ghapantsi, Grigor Oshakantsi, Hakob Nalian, Hovhannes Karnetsi, Simeon Yerevantsi, and others wrote in it. However, wishing to be understood by the masses, these songsters not only made *grabar* easier but also wrote songs and works in the local dialect language, *ramkoren*.

Religious poetry was also reinvigorated by *grabar*; its development is explained by political and historic reasons, relating to the Protestant-Catholic-Apostolic confessional problems, enervating the Armenian Church. In spite of their secular spirit, all of the authors mentioned above wrote religious poems, utilizing the *grabar* language appropriate for devotional poetry. Alongside the religious, the secular liberal song commenced, the first authors being Petros Ghapantsi and Paghtasar Dpir. While secular and mundane themes, satirical and social issues were subject matters of poetry from Naghash Hovnatan to Sayat-Nova, then the eighteenth century, known as the era of movements of "sword and pen," discovered the national patriotic song.

Nonetheless, social, labor, and love poems which did not possess the lusty spirit of pleasure of contemporary bardic love songs, nor the external descriptive splendor of love by medieval minstrels, continued to also be written in pages of *grabar* poetry. The romantic sentiment of poets in this era is closer to the spirit of the time they lived in and is gloomier, sorrowful, and rational. The aforementioned qualities, characterizing eighteenth century poetry, were a result of early Armenian classicism, which added to these features unique aspects of classic art—the picturesque yet sometimes excessive and rhetorical style.

It should not be forgotten, however, that so strong and dominant was the influence of bardic and folk songs in this century that *grabar* poetry could not avoid being nurtured by the fountains of folk art. This combined quality characterized the first period of Armenian classicism, which in the eighteenth century produced two famous figures—Paghtasar Dpir and Petros Ghapantsi.

The first of these, *PAGHTASAR DPIR* (Grigorian, 1683-1768), lived and worked in Constantinople, was an educator, publisher,

composer, scientist, and cultural activist who, in 1741, directed the Gum Gapu main college as superintendent and lecturer. He left behind literary, historical, and philological papers, valuable among which are two volumes of grammar, written in the vernacular language (*Parzabanutium kerakanutian karcharot yev diurimats* [A Brief and Comprehensible Explication of Grammar] and *Hator yerkrord kerakanutian ...* [Second Volume of Grammar ...], 1736).¹ For the Constantinople schools, Paghtasar Dpir prepared and published, in *grabar* and vernacular, language and grammar textbooks that served Armenian seminaries for approximately a hundred years. These tracts found a positive reception not only in their day but also in the nineteenth century and were published a few times. However, most valuable among the literary heritage left behind by Paghtasar Dpir are his poems, which were published in the volume *Tagharan Pokrik* (Little Song-Book), in 1723, which had six printings in the eighteenth century alone. Paghtasar Dpir also wrote religious poems that do not bring any novelty, are weak, and imitate accepted norms of religious encomiums. Those poems of his that reflect sentiments of the Constantinople Armenian milieu and the poet's social and nationalistic ideas are more interesting. Notable among these is the poem "Ar Mamona" (To Mammon), where the author protests against the rule of the purse and considers money as the source of injustice in life. Generally, Paghtasar Dpir is dissatisfied with his time and life because he sees unfair, filthy manners, and infidelity everywhere. And based on that, he encourages moralistic ideas—to be good, kind, and truthful due to the transitoriness of life.

The most valuable in the poet's heritage are his poems of spring and love (nearly thirty in number), which are song-poems and have been sung for years. Among these are "I nnjmaned arkayakan ..." (From Your Royal Sleep ...), "Mek aznevi mi seren ka i gelkhis" (There is a Gentle Love in Me), "Shat sirov kez barev, im achatss luis" (Greetings with Love, Light of My Eyes), "Sirahar, sirahar" (Lover, Lover), and other songs expressing tender and warm sentiments, and are written in the manner of oriental love songs. In this sense, he is close to the medieval Armenian balladeers' art, and yet different from them because he bears certain shades of bardic songs.

Love is the means to enjoy life and the world, the paramour is a "sweet dove," "golden apple," fragrant flower (nenuphar, violet, lily, rose, basil) which he seeks everywhere and burns in longing. In these

songs, Paghtasar Dpir has powerfully expressed also the faraway longing of the man wandering in expatriation for his native land. That feeling is tender and deeply felt by the poet. And, it is this that becomes the quality which makes his songs very personal.

Taking my sun I go into a foreign land, my sweet, alas,
Wander from knoll to knoll, crying restlessly, my dear;
An hour away from you is a thousand days, my sweet, alas;
My dear sweet darling, please forget me not,
Light of my eyes, joy of heart, abandon me not.

I became a willing slave of your love, my sweet, alas,
I wander and travel the peaks and the valleys, my dear,
Tossed about, searching you endlessly, my sweet, alas;
My dear sweet darling, please forget me not,
Light of my eyes, joy of heart, abandon me not.²

Part of the nature and love songs are his poems dedicated to the rose and blbul where Dpir, like Armenian balladeers of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, describes the nightingale mourning the loss of the rose in the beautiful spring orchard and considers the sorrow of his human love a sea compared to the love of the unfortunate nightingale. He describes the love of the rose and the nightingale in the bosom of picturesque nature and calls on his lover to imitate their joy.

Since the poet wrote his songs to be performed, he paid particular attention to proportions and rhyming of the tune. These are mostly little poems consisting of up to six verses. They are varied from the structural point of view—sometimes each verse gets from two to eight lines, according to the melodiousness. Sometimes Paghtasar Dpir composed the music himself; and at others, he adapted them to other tunes. His pretty song “From Your Royal Sleep” is sung even today with his melody. Sayat-Nova’s famous song “Dun en gkhen” (You Are Very Wise) is also sung with the same melody.

From your royal sleep,
Arise, my dear, arise;
The rays of sun are here;

Arise, my dear, arise.

Pretty picture and view,
Such as the moon when full,
There is no one like you;
Arise, my dear, arise.

The charming sight of you
Made me a slave of you;
Lest burnt by sun be you,
Arise, my dear, arise.

How long should cry my soul?
Rose, red and immortal,
I am pitiable,
Arise, my dear, arise.

The sun and heat are here,
Want your beauty to sear;
Gone the night funereal,
Arise, my dear, arise.

My beloved is matchless,
For eyes a magnet is;
In the 1708 year this,
Arise, my dear, arise.³

Paghtasar Dpir wrote his songs in *grabar*, yet so simply and accessibly that it almost achieves the comprehensibility of the vernacular. His language is clean; he does not have use for Persian and Turkish words; the influence of the Constantinople Armenian dialect is not felt. He was a well-loved poet in eighteenth to nineteenth century Armenian reality. It is surprising that his art, lacking an energetic thrust and sumptuous colors, nonetheless, left a considerable impression on contemporary and later Armenian writers. Petros Ghapantsi, Simeon Yerevantsi, Hovhannes Karnetsi, and others have been profoundly influenced by him. And numerous songs have been written with the tunes of his melodies.

The political life of Armenians in that era was a reason for the creation of patriotic songs. Often, poems with religious content and in the form of prayer were being written, eulogizing sentiments of emancipation or mourning the lost fatherland. It should be said, that two sentiments became dominant in Armenian literature from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries—love of the fatherland and love of the faith. These sentiments were often fused to raise the issue of freedom. This tendency was present in Armenian consciousness as early as the fifth century and very carefully, at times even in allegory, it combined Christian ideology with the idea of salvation of the motherland and the nation. This is noticeable in Armenian *sharakans*, as well as elegies and religious encomiums. From these genres, the mystic love of liberty grew into full-blown patriotic song, constituting a separate large portion especially in nineteenth to twentieth century lyricism. Love of liberty is one of the first significant qualities to be transmitted from religious literature to the secular, later on achieving a unique and independent development. Unity of the political fate of the Armenian land and Armenian Church has expressed the secular sentiment of patriotism in the form of spiritual supplication within the religious hymn, from Mashtots to Petros Ghapantsi. Paghtasar Dpir, religious singer Ghazar Jahketsi, Simeon Yerevantsi, Grigor Oshakantsi, Georg Khubov, and others were eulogizing religious, patriotic themes, or mourning the devastated land in the eighteenth century.

Among these, *PETROS GHAPANTSI*'s (d. 1784) nature and homeland songs occupy a unique place, as echoes of political awakening and renewed Armenian life.⁴

Petros Ghapantsi, who was from the province of Siunik, was an Ejmiatzin friar during the years 1753-1756, active also in Constantinople and Adrianapolis, and in old age was designated prelate of the See of Nicomedia.

The collection of his songs, titled *Grguik kochetsial yergaran* (Pamphlet, Called Song-Book), appeared in 1772 in Constantinople. Many of them (approximately thirty-six) were popular and sung everywhere—"Kaghtsrik garunn yekial yehas" (Sweet Spring is Here), "Putar mez, naghshun kakav" (Colorful Partridge, Hurry to Us), "Aravotian kaghtsr yev anush hoveren" (The Sweet and Tender Airs of Morn), "Tzil-tzil voski e vardi terteren" (The Rose Petals are Buds of Gold), "Kanaik amenain kork im sirakan" (Ladies All My Dear Sisters),

and other songs, the tunes of which Ghapantsi himself composed. His poems are written with religious, nationalistic, and nature themes and number more than 150 lyric poems, epics, quatrains, and couplets that bear a forceful individual stamp.

The *grabar* religious song, that was developing due to the reawakening of classicism in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, had spiritual and patriotic meaning for Ghapantsi. However, there are such in the series of his religious poems which are not a novelty in Armenian literature from the standpoint of topic. Similar poems had been written starting in the twelfth century until the eighteenth. Standing apart from these are his religious poems with political and liberal shades, the sentiments of a real, living person and one who is in the ups and downs of the struggle for life. In those spiritual songs there is no celestial worship of the faithful but, instead, appeal to God to save his country, nationalistic ardor, and desire for emancipation. He expressed issues of the state of his native land and ethnos in the same secular and profound sentiments as balladeers of preceding centuries were singing their paramour with a burning and seared love ("The Sweet and Tender ...").

Bedecked by your song, I am adorned,
Burning by new, new love, for you I long,
Disgusted from evil I am stoned;
 Open, open, O my matchless rose red,
 Your loveliness like the sun inflamed.

My heart hastens into mourning and tears,
And by the hour my hope disappears,
Never finding you yet again appeals;
 Open, open, O my matchless rose red,
 Your loveliness like the sun inflamed.

The spring is gone but still for you long I,
Like a furnace fire intensely burn I,
May you live long, lost forever am I;
 Open, open, O my matchless rose red,
 Your loveliness like the sun inflamed,

Pride of spring, rose, rose,
 O come to me,
 Listen to me,
 And look at me,
 See how I am consumed.

At your appealing sight, all the birds of the sky are happy;
 They fly high and they fly low, gathering ceremoniously;
 All the lands and all the orchards are adorned in your beauty;
 My matchless rose, rose,
 Pride of spring, rose, rose,
 O come to me,
 Listen to me,
 And look at me,
 See how I am consumed.⁶

The distichous and quadrileneal didactic poems, which have a philosophical or satirical bent, form a part of Ghapantsi's literary legacy, too. Fundamentally, the sources for these are unwritten folk tales, proverbs, and riddles. It is proper to note that, in the Middle Ages, starting with Nerses Shnorhali, various concise verses of a few lines were composed, called riddles, quatrains, *kafas*, *hairens*, maxims, tunes, songlets, manis, etc. As literary genres, these verses originated in the twelfth century with Shnorhali's quatrain riddles (approximately 300). Following him came Hovhannes Yerznkatsi (sixty to sixty-five select *hairens*); Stepanos Dashtetsi, a poet in the second half of the seventeenth century (forty in number);⁷ Hakob Nalian (couplets and quatrains of a religious nature); Hovhannes Karnetsi (love quatrains); Paghtasar Dpir, and others.

As in his longer songs, Petros Ghapantsi comes across as a skillful poet also in his distichous verses. The form and content of the poem are equally important for him, for which he paid close attention to vocabulary, rhymes, puns, and metricalization. He wrote poems from the distichous to the cinqueleneal, where he displayed a variety of terminology, puns, and homophonic rhymes. And it is exactly in this, his formalistic and rhetorical tendencies, that Ghapantsi is unlike his predecessor, Paghtasar Dpir. In this sense, it is not improper when Hrant Asatur wrote that "Ghapantsi was the most accomplished rhymist of his century, a personification of *bel esprit*."⁸

The heavens thunder, the clouds asprinkle,
 The dew on the flowers gracefully sparkles,
 While these agrowing, are so beautiful;

Prisoner, do not cry,
 For the wanton might,
 Anon now, come nigh.

From high up the rain pours down hastily,
 On the rose petals it settles dewy,
 Resplendent in gold, it shines in beauty ...⁹

Or:

O, gardener, why are you hurried?
 My heart of my blood is bored,
 So do not be just and sordid,
 Lift my sorrow you never did;

Rose, do not fall,
 Come, do not fall,

Do not make me look pitiful,
 When I am born, you nurture me,
 And by your love saturate me.¹⁰

The poems of Ghapantsi and Paghtasar Dpir have differently affected poets who came forth in the first decades of the nineteenth century—Hovhan Vanantetsi, Arsen Bagratuni, Harutiun Alamdarian, and Mesrop Taghiadian. The initiators of modern Armenian classicism were Ghapantsi, Paghtasar Dpir, and theorist Khachatur Erzurumetsi. "Paghtasar Dpir and Petros Ghapantsi are poets of the transition phase from Armenian medieval and bardic poetry to modern classicist poetry," writes Shushanik Nazarian, author of the monograph *Petros Ghapantsi*.¹¹ They were followed by the aforementioned Mkhitarist writers and theorist Yedvard Hiurmiuzian, with his tract, *Ardzern banasteghtzutiun* (Portable Poetry). In Petros Ghapantsi's century, the types of classicist poetry were the elegy, eulogy, and lyrical epic, while the classicism of Mkhitarist writers was reflected chiefly in dramaturgy.

As a general comment, it should be noted that classicism was a known and widespread literary orientation in Europe during the

seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, drawing themes from Greek, Roman history, and mythology and attempting to resemble ancient secular poets and elegists.

Contrary to other nations, classicism had an overly religious-political content in Armenian literature. It survived for 150 years, forging its own aesthetic canon.

In these centuries, social activism stimulated ventures for the liberation of Armenia, from Israyel Ori to the Shahamirians, while on the other hand, it supported educational, enlightenment renaissance. For this reason, the eighteenth century is considered the era of "sword and pen," when aspirations of liberty, enlightenment, and patriotism were shaping "Armenian ideology." This was researching Armenian history and literature, glorifying its past majesty, trying to classify achievements in social and cultural spheres as well as art. Its aim was the discovery of Armenianism, the establishment of self-realization which was to aid future plans in different aspects of Armenian life. Based on this, Armenian classicism appears in literature, under the influence of European (especially French) classicism, expressing cultural-educational and patriotic motifs. Classicism, as a literary direction, was originally reflected in eighteenth century Armenian poetry, since lyricism was the ancient mother lode of Armenian literature—its most cultivated and perfected genre.¹² Armenian classicism introduced enlightenment, political and liberal aspirations, rationalism and sensibility, modern demands of morality and remonstrance, the *grabar* language, a rhetorical style, and methodical metrication into lyricism.¹³

As a transitory ring, Armenian poetry of the eighteenth century conferred the peculiar qualities of its characteristics to the nineteenth century, and classicism stepped into its period of maturity. This was displayed in works by Hovhan Vanandetsi (1772-1841) and Mkhitarist poets Ghukas Inchichian (1758-1833), Gabriel Avetikian (1751-1827), Manuel Jakhjakhian (1770-1835), Yeghia Tovmachan (1777-1848), and Arsen Bagratuni (1790-1866) who came forth in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

During the nineteenth century, Armenian classicism spread also in Moscow, Tiflis, and Nor-Nakhijevan beside Venice and Constantinople; it lasted until mid-century, coming into conflict with other literary directions emerging in the same century—romanticism and realism.

20. Armenian Culture in the Eighteenth Century: The Mkhitarist Order

The national and cultural movement initiated in Armenia and Armenian colonies, as noted, created its own ideology in the eighteenth century. The role of the Indian-Armenian community was especially significant in this matter. Indian-Armenian activists Movses Baghramian, who published his treatise *Nor tetrak, vor kochi Hordorak* (New Pamphlet, Called Exhortation) (Madras, 1722), and Shahamir Shahamirian, with his work *Girk anvanial Vorogait parats* (Book, Titled Trap of Glory) (Madras, 1773), came forward with their political and enlightenment projects. Inspired by ideas of French philosophers and with pan-Armenian concerns, Baghramian and Shahamirian demanded that the Armenian people study their past history, become acquainted with European politics, and heighten national self-consciousness. They indicated methods of achieving liberation and statehood and suggested their outline of a state legislature. European revolutionary concepts as well as the struggle of the Indian people against British rule served as models for Armenian liberation ideology.

Besides these aspirations for recovering political self-determination, due to expanding and developing trade relations in the eighteenth century, significant progress was made in all branches of Armenian culture in nearly all the large capitals of Armenians abroad.

Living in various countries of the world and coming into contact with different civilizations, languages, and customs, Armenians aspired to preserve the history and culture of their nation, attempting to manifest themselves in order to fortify the sense of ethnicity of Armenians. On the other side was the threat of assimilation and annihilation for thousands of Armenians cowering in foreign lands. Therefore, it was necessary to carry out strong cultural, educational, and literary activity, not only for purposes of self-preservation but also to acquaint other

peoples with the Armenian nation, its past, and spiritual assets. The aim of self-realization, concealed in the thick darkness of medieval obscurity for centuries, had now come forward for all to see, declaring the value and essence of the Armenian nation and culture to civilized centers of the globe.

Huge and tragic dislocations had not destroyed the valiant will of the Armenians. And, relying on their indomitable moral character, with an inexplicable effort they revealed the creative spirit of the race and ancient treasures of its civilization.

Armenian printing spread further during the eighteenth century. Printshops in Constantinople, Amsterdam, and Smyrna continued to operate, while new Armenian printshops opened in Madras (1772), Calcutta (1796), Ejmiatzin (1771), Trieste (1775), Venice (1782), Nor-Nakhijevan (1789), London (1736), St. Petersburg (1780), Astrakhan (1796), Vienna (1811), Moscow (1820), and elsewhere. According to the historian Leo's data, 128 titles were published in the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth, there were 523.¹

Mkhitarist friars had a significant role in the development of Armenian culture, chiefly in the field of philological studies and translations of foreign work into Armenian.

The founder of the Mkhitarist order was *MKHITAR SEBASTATSI* (also called Mkhitar Abba; his lay name was Manuk), who was born in the year 1676, in the city of Sebastia (Sivas). He received a pious education, became a deacon at fifteen, and dedicated himself totally to religious, philological activities.

In order to acquire wider knowledge, he went to Ejmiatzin where, however, his expectations were not realized in the gloomy and ignorant monastic environment. He left Ejmiatzin, went to the Sevan monastery, hoping to find what he was seeking here. In the end, his exertions were fruitless on native soil; and, extremely wretched, with his health disintegrating, he returned to his birthplace. At age twenty, in 1696, he was ordained a priest and after long hardships, joining the Catholic faith in 1701, established a religious order in Constantinople, consisting of ten studious, learned, and devout males.

The struggle of the Armenian *lusavorchakan* (apostolic) Church against Catholicism forced Mkhitar in 1706 to move to the city of Meton, which was under the rule of Venice.

Here the Mkhitarists built a church, staying under the auspices of the Pope of Rome for twelve continuous years. But the Turko-Italian wars dislodged the friars (1715) who, in 1717, settled for good on the island of St. Lazar, not far from Venice, and were called the Mkhitarist order after Mkhitar Sebastatsi's name, by special arrangement of the Pope of Rome.

Leaving long-lasting troubles and difficulties behind, Mkhitar Abba enlarged the order, wrote, interpreted, and translated numerous religious and linguistic works. He was at once a teacher, eloquent preacher, translator, printer-publisher, always inspired by pure and holy pious feelings, following the principle of "Neither would I sacrifice my nation to my faith, nor my faith to my nation." Mkhitar Sebastatsi passed away in 1749, at the age of 73 and was buried on the island of St. Lazar.

Sebastatsi handed down a considerably rich and esteemed literary-publishing legacy, particularly religious. Notable among these is printing of the Bible in 1733—the third publication of the scriptures (the first was Voskan Yerevantsi's in Amsterdam, 1666-1668; the second, Petros Latinatsi's in Constantinople, 1705), a superb printing aesthetically fashioned, consisting of 1,280 pages. Also valuable works are grammars of *grabar* he prepared—the studies *Kerakanutium grabari lezvi haikazian seri* (Grammar of the *Grabar* Language of the Armenian Race) (1730) and *Hartsumn kertoghakan yev pataskhani zkerakanutene yev zmasants norin* (Poetic Questions and Responses from Grammar and Its Figures of Speech). The most important work in Sebastatsi's literary legacy is considered his massive endeavor *Bargirk haikazian lezvi* (Dictionary of the Armenian Language) on which his pupils collaborated, and the first volume of which appeared in 1749; while the second was brought forth in 1769, after Sebastatsi's death. This was the first comprehensive lexicon of the Armenian language, used until now, and has an exceptional merit. It is the culmination of toilsome labor and consists of three parts: *grabar*-vemacular, vernacular-*grabar*, and indices of proper names. Notable publications are also Sebastatsi's *Girk kristoneakani vardapetutian* (Book of Christian Doctrine) written in an accessible language, his interpretations of the Holy Bible, and his translation, *Tovmayi Akvinatsvo astvatzabanutiune* (The Theology of Thomas Aquinas). In his works, all of which are written in *grabar*, Sebastatsi tries in every way to purge Armenian from Latinism and other distortions, intending to bring it close to the classical gilded *grabar*.

Likewise, he was the founder of Mkhitarist educational institutions, which operate in various parts of the world until today and have produced generations steeped in Armenianism. In the art-loving Venetian environment, the Mkhitarist order reared talented individuals who made significant contributions in numerous branches of the cultivation of Armenian language, Armenian history, literature, philology, and translation. Twenty-two years after Mkhitar Sebastatsi's death the order was broken up and divided into two factions. One stayed on the island of St. Lazar, while the other left and settled in Trieste, then in 1811 moved to Vienna.

Pursuing educational and nationalistic aspirations, the Mkhitarists established a school on the island of St. Lazar and Armenian print shops in Venice, Trieste, and Vienna. They engaged in a vast armenological endeavor and acquainted Armenians with western (especially Latin) civilization. Being in the center of Europe, they observed and acquired refined scientific and literary achievements of the West, studying the essential methods required to perform scientific and scrupulous research. In short, they introduced western taste and mentality to the Armenian nation and acted as a bridge between the two. It was through the Mkhitarists that the centuries-old Armenian culture was brought out, published, and translated, producing considerable interest in the past of the Armenian people and its intellectual assets. And it should be noted that the nationalistic sentiment was more victorious than the religious in this scientific crucible. At a time when all religious orders were suppressed in Italy, Napoleon Bonaparte made an exception of the Mkhitarist order, thus preserving its monastic and academic existence with a special decree issued August 17, 1810.

Mikayel Chamchian (1738-1823), Ghukas Inchichian (1758-1833), Gabriel Avetikian (1751-1827), Mkrtich Avgerian (1762-1854), Manuel Kajuni (1803-1904), Arsen Bagratuni (1780-1866), Yedvard Hiurmiuzian (1799-1876), and Ghevond Alishan (1820-1901) of the Venetian Mkhitarists were industrious scientists—only the last three of which were also endowed with literary skills and occupy a place in the history of Armenian literature.

The primary issue, at the center of the attention and vigilance of the order, was the study of the classical Armenian language, *grabar*, preparation of grammar courses, and dictionaries. What disturbed Mkhitarist fathers was the state of *grabar*, which had been distorted and

subjected to changes after the fifteenth century. Preachers called Unitores propagated Latinist Armenian in Armenia in the fourteenth century, pursuing plans of converting Armenians into Catholics. The Unitores translated a large volume of religious books from Latin to Armenian, adapting *grabar* to the grammar and conjugation of Latin. Thus they distorted the language, creating a strange mixture that had spread and dominated Armenian reality for centuries until the Mkhitarists came forth.²

The first step against the influence of Latin was Sebastatsi's book *Kerakanutium grabari* ... (Grammar of the *Grabar* ...) which, being the first serious attempt of critical syntax of the classical Armenian language, had a significant impact on Armenian researchers of the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries (Mikayel Chamchian, Paghtasar Dpir, Gabriel Avetikian, Arsen Bagratuni, Arsen Aitenian, Anton Garagashian, and others). Such famous Mkhitarist scientists as the excellent *grabar* experts Chamchian, with *Kerakanutium haikazian lezvi* (Grammar of the Armenian Language) (1779), Avetikian with *Kerakanutium haikakan* (Armenian Grammar) (1815), and Bagratuni in *Hayeren kerakanutium i pets zargatselots* (Armenian Grammar for the Advanced) (1852) definitively arranged and perfected the morphology and syntax, orthography, and lexicography of *grabar* and purged it of foreign residue.

The vernacular Armenian, which had become the language of letters, memoirs, and historiography, was cultivated to a certain extent by Mkhitarist mendicants; although, it should be noted, they absolutely and vehemently insisted that *grabar* should forever be considered the sole literary language of the Armenians. Nonetheless, though with profound bitterness, the Mkhitarist fathers were involved with issues of western vernacular Armenian language and grammar, publishing instructional-grammatical courses and even religious books in the vernacular.

In 1727 Sebastatsi published the book *Durn kerakanutian ashkharhabar lezvin hayots* (Introduction to Grammar of the Armenian Vernacular Language) which involved the grammar of Western Armenian.

During the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, industrious friars of the order published also various religious-theological books in the vernacular and established a theatre at the school of the Mkhitarists in

Venice where, along with plays in *grabar*, comedies in the vernacular of Constantinople were staged. However, the largest role in the theoretical solidification of the western Armenian vernacular belongs to Mkhitarist abbot Arsen Aitenian, whose study, *Knnakan kerakanutiun ashkharhabar kam ardi hayeren lezvi* (Critical Grammar of the Vernacular or Modern Armenian Language) (1866), is a most acclaimed treatise in its linguistic knowledge, classification of the Armenian language, and critical grammar of the vernacular, maintaining its erudition until now.

Mkhitarist fathers were not only pioneers in cultivation of the Armenian classical language but also authors of the first scientifically prepared Armenian dictionaries. In this regard, the two-volume lexicon *Nor bargirk haikazian lezvi* (New Dictionary of the Armenian Language) (consisting of 1140 and 1067 pages respectively), with the authorship of Khachatur Siurmelian, Gabriel Avetikian and Mkrtich Avgerian, published in 1836-1837 and the culmination of a long-lasting labor of fifty years (1784-1834) is world-renowned. It was published in an abridged format in 1846, titled *Artzern bargirk haikazian lezvi* (Portable Dictionary of the Armenian Language). Grigor Peshtmalchian's *Bargirk haikazian lezvi* (Dictionary of the Armenian Language), released in Constantinople in 1841, is considered a valuable work, too.

Of the Mkhitarists, Harutiun Avgerian, who possessed erudite linguistic skills, authored a number of dictionaries, among which are the French-Armenian dictionary, *Bararan hamarot i gaghghiakane i hai* (Concise Dictionary From French Into the Armenian) (1812) and the Armenian-French-Turkish dictionary, called *Bargirk i gaghghiakane i hai yev i tachik barbars* (Dictionary From the French Into the Armenian and Turkish Languages) (1840). In those years, studying Armenology with the Mkhitarists was George Gordon Noel, Lord Byron, with whose collaboration Avgerian prepared the English-Armenian (1817) and Armenian-English (1819) grammar textbooks, and later, the English-Armenian (1821) and Armenian-English (1825) dictionaries (approximately 40,000 words) for which Byron wrote the preface. The latter did translations from the Armenian original of the Gospels, as well as from Khorenatsi and Lambronatsi, published in the aforementioned bilingual textbooks.

Lexicographical work was carried out also in other places populated by Armenians. In St. Petersburg, Grigor Khaldarian prepared an Armenian-Russian dictionary (1788); in Moscow, Harutian Alamdarian (1821), Aleksandr Khudabashian (1838), and elsewhere.

The Mkhitarists published also grammatical textbooks for French, Italian, German, Russian, Latin, and other languages as well as bilingual and trilingual dictionaries in languages of European and oriental peoples. They did not spare efforts also to publish in a tidy and comprehensive fashion works of ancient and medieval Armenian writers and philosophers, which were printed in other cities, too, and even translated into European languages.

* * *

In Armenian colonies and particularly by the Mkhitarists, numerous ancient and modern valuable manuscripts of Armenian history, literature, philology, theology were brought out, capturing the attention of European scientists; and, the expansion of Armenology was originated, producing in the eighteenth and, especially, nineteenth centuries such famous figures as Johan Schröder, Henrich Brenner, Friedrich Windischmann, Heinrich Petermann, Frederic Neumann, Antoine J. de Saint-Martin, Le Vaillant de Florival, Edouard Dulaurier, Marie Brosset, Victor Langlois, and many others. Works of ancient and medieval Armenian authors were translated into various European languages. The Swedish Armenologist Henrich Brenner translated Khorenatsi's *Hayots patmutiun* (History of the Armenians), with certain abbreviations, into Latin for the first time and published it in Stockholm in 1733, while the complete text in Latin with foreword and notes, was released in London, in 1736, by the brothers George and William Whiston. A few of Shnorhali's and Narekatsi's works were translated into Latin by the French Armenologists G. Villefroy and Maturin La Croze. Also, the Armenian scriptures were translated into Latin by the French philologist Simon P. Lourdet.

Through European Armenologists, the origin, correlations, and grammar of the Armenian language were studied, too. Johan Schröder prepared the first meticulous grammar with the book *Thesaurus linguae Armenicae* (Treasury of the Armenian Language), Amsterdam, 1711. This is the grammar of *grabar* in Latin, where citations of

conversational vernacular (Eastern Armenian) are placed with Latin translations.

In the form of multifaceted Mkhitarist publications and serious scientific studies, the West discovered not only the Armenian language and philology but was also acquainted with several famous works of universal culture, the originals of which had been lost centuries earlier, while their Armenian translations (accomplished mainly during the fifth to sixth centuries) were reissued by the Mkhitarists. Most famous among these was the *Chronicles* of Eusebius of Caesarea, encompassing documents of world history, up to the first quarter of the fourth century. The Greek original of this notable work had been lost and only its Armenian translation, done in the fifth century, had been preserved, published in 1818 in the *grabar* original and with Mkrtych Avgerian's Latin translation.

Among works preserved in Armenian were also certain texts of Philo of Alexandria, which were translated into Latin.

In contrast to the seventeenth century, when the nature of books published were fundamentally devotional-religious, the eighteenth century saw secular titles appear more often. The literary and scientific taste of the Western world was considerably close to Mkhitarist mendicants and, in whichever field of study they investigated, the freshness of their viewpoints is palpable which, however, is inseparable from traditional conceptions. The novelty is visible in the classicist school they introduced into Armenian literature, as well as in linguistics and historiography, with their contemporary principles of critical research. In this regard, Mkhitarist publications are valuable historical, topographical, geographical, bibliographical, and archeological studies and played a significant role in the national self-consciousness of the Armenian people, as well as in the province of classification and development of Armenian language and culture.

Mikayel Chamchian's monumental tri-volume study, *Patmutiun hayots* (History of the Armenians) (1786) with the comparative examination of Armenian and foreign sources, represents the first comprehensive history written in modern times, beginning with the time of the origin of the Armenian people and extending to the third quarter of the eighteenth century. This tome instructed generations and provided international standards of historiography, avenues of national self-realization, along the tracks of which many have traversed.

Ghukas Inchichian's *Storagrutium hin Hayastaniaits* (Description of Ancient Armenia), *Hnakhosutium ashkharhagrakan Hayastaniaits ashkharhin* (Geographical Archeology of the Armenian Land); Ghevond Alishan's *Teghagir Hayots Metzats* (Topography of Greater Armenia); Garegin Zarbhanalian's *Matenagitutium* (Bibliography) and *Matenagrutian patmutium* (History of Literature); as well as of the Viennese Mkhitarists, the first and second volumes of Hovsep Gaterchian's *Tiezerakan patmutium* (Universal History); Anton (Matatia) Garagashian's *Chashak voskeghen dprutian* (Aesthetics of Belles Lettres) and four-volume *Knnakan patmutium hayots* (Critical History of the Armenians), and many other works issued in the nineteenth century are studies of great value, too.

Regardless of the devotional and scientific content of Mkhitarist activities, nevertheless, the publication of numerous primers and instructional textbooks testify that they paid special attention to educational and pedagogical issues. Not only topics of the social sciences (language, literature, history, art) had a place in their instructional programs but also courses relating to the natural sciences. For this reason, whatever was published within Europe in the natural sciences, Mkhitarists presented in the Armenian language (chemistry, mathematics, arithmetic, physics, as well as rhetoric, geography, draftsmanship, etc.). Khachatur Erzurumetsi (*Hamarotakan imastasirutium* [Concise Philosophy], 1711), Sahak Pronian (*Yerkrachaputium* [Geometry], 1794; *Yerankiunachaputium* [Trigonometry], 1810), Sukias Aghamalian (*Tvabanutium* [Arithmetic], 1781), Khachatur Siurmelian (*Hamarot tvabanutium ashkharhabar* [Brief Arithmetic in the Vernacular], 1788), Matteos and Ghukas Vanandetsis (*Bnabanutium imastasirakan* [Science of Nature], 1702), and others wrote studies on geometry, arithmetic, and philosophy in various centers of the world.

* * *

Inasmuch as acquaintance and relations with neighboring peoples deepened, the interests of Armenians in the culture of those peoples expanded.

During the eighteenth century, assets of the history, philosophy, art, and literature of foreign nations were becoming the object of interest

not only of Mkhitarists but also Armenian colonies. And a toilsome translational endeavor took off which, especially in the nineteenth century, rendered almost all the famous works of international science and culture into Armenian.

Georg Palatetsi the scribe translated Homer's *Iliad* and numerous other historical and topographical works from Greek, Turkish, and Hebrew, providing extensive information to historians of the period.

From Greek, *Girk Hunats vor kochi Orolokion metz* (Greek Prayer-Book) (Constantinople, 1800), Aesop's fables, titled *Arakk Yezobosi* (Fables of Aesop) (Trieste, 1784) were translated. Among important translations accomplished by the Mkhitarists from Latin are the works of Thomas Aquinas and Thomas à Kempis; many works of Latin authors of the ancient world—Horace, Plautius, Ovid, Virgil, Cato, Seneca, Lucanus, and others; as well as Greek authors—Hesiod, Euripides, Menander, Pythagoras, Aristophanes, and others. Anthony Gaudin's *Philosophy* (4 vols., transl. Vrtanes Askerian [Venice, 1750]) was also translated from the Latin. Works rendered from English were the British traveler Hanway's *Patmagrutium varutsn u gortzots Nader shah tagavorin parsits* (Historiography of the Life and Deeds of the Persian King Nadir Shah) (Madras, 1780) and William Robertson's *Vipasanutium Ameriko* (Epic of America, 2 vols., transl. M. Gasparian [Trieste, 1786]); from Italian, Charles Rollin's study, *Patmutium Hromeakan* (Roman History, 6 vols., transl. Vrtanes Askerian [Venice, 1816-1817]); from French, François Fenelon's work *Patmutium Telamaki vordvo Huliosi* (History of Telemachus, son of Julius, 2 vols., transl. Margar Yerevantsi [Nor-Nakhijevan, 1793]); from Turkish, Fizuli's *Vardi yev sokhaki yerge* (Song of the Bird and the Nightingale, transl. Margar Geghamian), etc.

During the nineteenth century, endeavors of translation were even further intensified by Mkhitarists and in other places (Constantinople, Smyrna, Nor-Nakhijevan, Madras, Calcutta, Moscow), encompassing the works of classical and modern greats.

As regards literary assets created by themselves and their examination, the Mkhitarists cross the demarcation of the eighteenth century, flourish during the nineteenth, and, entering the periods of modern Armenian literature, are out of the time limits of our study.

Conclusion

Thus, from the period of the Golden Age until the nineteenth century, Armenian literature passed through fourteen long centuries. It progressed along a path characterized by declines and ascents, strong in its national spirit and instincts. The intellectual and logical foundation of the fifth century, as an initial and classical achievement, created that rational and aesthetic nature of Armenian tradition which, in its multifaceted features, provided an example and style to writers of various centuries, up to the nineteenth century and perhaps beyond. From Armenian ecclesiastical literature and historiography, Armenian letters extended to the secular song and poetry, constructing a multi-genre literature, stable in its spiritual-religious foundation, refined sentiments and is characterized by a proper aesthetic quality and level.

The strong qualities of the Armenian spiritual fabric and tradition were prominent especially in the transitory stages—from the ancient era (fifth to seventh centuries) to the period of secularization (tenth to fourteenth centuries), and then from the state of darkness and obscurity to the era of restoration (the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries). The consciousness of national existence, which recovered itself every time at the brink of destruction, strengthened, and pollinated the seeds of classicist thought, Armenian imagination, and sensibility; and literature and culture blossomed in these periods—periods, altogether different from each other in their characteristics.

Armenian letters, originating and reaching its zenith in the same fifth century, had a religio-ecclesiastical content and produced famous historical works, revealing the origins of the Armenians, the traditions, and eminence of the nation. The phenomenal medieval poetry was created under the influence of the secularization of life and perceptions beginning in the tenth century where humanistic and intellectual tendencies, demands of the mind and the soul fused into each other in a curious fashion;

although, the antagonism between the spiritual and secular currents extended until the nineteenth century and was manifest in nonsuperficial parallels. The deterioration of political conditions in Armenia during the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, the strong influence of Islamic manners and attitudes, and the decline and distortions of Armenian culture and language did not promise any change, if a group of church activists in Armenia, New Julfa, and later in Constantinople had not renovated monasteries and schools during the seventeenth century or had not started spreading literacy, copying manuscripts, and preparing textbooks. This activity jolted Armenian consciousness, and it slowly ejected the heavy burden of medievalism. The renaissance of *grabar* and literature—fashioned out of the fading piety of Armenians, from the aspiration for re-establishment and restoration of the faith and Church, and from the love for almost vanishing Armenianism, language, and culture—played the same role as was accomplished during the fifth century, following the invention of the alphabet. It was during these centuries that the patriotic song originated and works of Movses Khorenatsi and other Armenian classics were published and read. During the eighteenth century, the activity of the Mkhitarists was added to this with their indomitable publishing, translational, and research efforts, bringing Armenian literature and letters, language, and history into the international arena. With this, the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries became a transition period in the history of Armenian literature—a bridge from the ancient to the modern; since, it was during those centuries that all the seeds were planted in literature, which were to blossom in the nineteenth century, outside Armenia and under foreign horizons, heralding the modern period of Armenian literature.

Notes

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Tamaz V. Gamkrelidze and V. V. Ivanov, *Indoyevropeyskiy yazyk i indoyevropeytsy* [The Indo-European Language and the Indo-Europeans] (Tbilisi, 1980).

2. See *Haikakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* [Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia], s.v. "HAYER" [Armenians], vol. 6 (Yerevan, 1980), p. 157.

3. See Suren Yeremian, "Haikakan lernashkharhi hnaguin zhoghovurde" [Oldest People of the Armenian Plateau], *Sovetakan Hayastan*, no. 10, 1966, pp. 19-20; Grigor A. Ghapantsian, *Khayasa-kolybel' armyan* [Hayasa Origin of the Armenians], (Yerevan, 1947); V. I. Khachatrian, "Khayasa i Nairi" [Hayasa and Nayiri], *Lraber Hasarakakan Gitutiunneri*, no. 11, 1973, pp. 37-47; idem, "Nairi i Armina" [Nayiri and Armina], *Lraber Hasarakakan Gitutiunneri*, no. 8, 1976, pp. 59-72; E. Forrer, "Hajasa-Azzi," *Caucasia*, no. 9, 1931; E. Kretschmer, "Die Nationale Name der Armenier Haikh," *Anzeiger der Akad. der Wiss. in Wien. phil-hist. Klasse*, no. 1-7, 1932, summarized in Armenian in *Handes Amsoria*, no. 7-8, 1937, pp. 420-32.

4. See L. A. Barseghian, "Hnaguin tseghayin miutiune Hayastanum" [The Oldest Tribal Union in Armenia], *Teghekagir Hasarakakan Gitutiunneri*, no. 1, 1962, pp. 87-90.

5. *The History of Herodotus*, transl. G. Rawlinson, ed. M. Komroff (New York: Tudor, 1932); Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, transl. Walter Miller, vols. 1 and 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: 1960-61); idem, *Anabasis*, ed. Maurice W. Mather and Joseph W. H. Norman, bks. 1-4 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962); *Strabonis Geographica*, ed. A. Meineke, vols. 1-3 (Leipzig, 1915-25).

6. See Martiros Gavukchian, *Hai zhoghovrdi tzagume* [Origin of the Armenian People] (Montreal, 1982), p. 73.

7. See Hakob Manandian, *Knnakan tesutium hai zhoghovrdi patmutian* [Critical Survey of the History of the Armenian People], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1944), p. 116.

8. See Heinrich Hübschmann, *Grundzüge der Armenischen Ethymologie* (Leipzig, 1883).

9. Georg B. Jahukian, "Haikakan sherte urartakan ditsaranum" [The Armenian Stratum in the Urartian Pantheon], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1986, p. 58.

10. Martiros Gavukchian, "Haikakan lernashkharhi bnik hndevropakhos hayere" [The Indigenous Indo-European-speaking Armenians of the Armenian Plateau], *Navasard*, no. 55, 1987, p. 44.

11. In this connection, the research of Hakobos Tashian, Acharian, and Ghapantsian is significant.

12. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1968), pp. 19-20.

13. Hrachia Acharian, *Hayots lezvi patmutiun* [History of the Armenian Language], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1940), p. 223.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 334.

15. The first meaningful writings in Armenia are associated with the Hittites and Akkadians. The Hittites, who settled in Asia Minor during the twentieth to eighteenth centuries B.C. and were one of the most powerful peoples of the Near East, left cuneiform and hieroglyphic symbols on baked clay tablets, representing various edicts, contracts, prayers, and rituals.

16. Georgi A. Melikishvili, *Urartskiy klinoobraznye nadpisi* [Urartian Cuneiform Inscriptions] (Moscow, 1960), pp. 325-26.

17. Ashot G. Abrahamian, *Hayots gir yev grchutiun* [Alphabet and Scripture of the Armenians] (Yerevan, 1973).

18. Relying primarily on Movses Khorenatsi, Artashes Martirosian argues that hieratic scholarship was not in Armenian, Persian, Greek, or Assyrian but rather in Aramaic. See Artashes Martirosian, *Mashtots* (Yerevan, 1982), pp. 38-47.

19. The Aramaic writing system was invented at the beginning of the first millennium on the basis of the simple Phoenician alphabet. Because it was easy to read, it spread among the peoples of the Near East—Jews, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and others. Toward the middle of the fourth century B.C., it displaced the difficult cuneiform system and survived through the first century of the Christian era (in Armenia, until the third century). The boundary markers of Artashes I, written in Aramaic and discovered in the twentieth century, have been deciphered by several scholars including the following: A. A. Borisov, "Nadpisi Artaksiya (Artashes), tsarya Armenii" [The Inscriptions of Artashes, King of Armenia], *Vestnik Drevney Istorii*, no. 2, 1946, pp. 97-107; A. Dupont-Sommer, "Les inscriptions araméennes trouvées près du lac Sévan (Arménie)," *Syria* 25, no. 1-2, 1946-48, pp. 53-66; A. G. Perikhanian, "Armyanskaya nadpis' iz Zangezura" [Armenian Inscriptions of Zangezur], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 4, 1965, pp. 106-28.

20. See Arakel Arakelian, *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun (1 d. m. t. a.-14 d.)* [History of the Development of the

Intellectual Culture of the Armenian People (first century B.C.-fourteenth century) (Yerevan, 1959), p. 37.

21. See *Plutarkia Kerovnatsvo Zugakshirk* [The Parallel Lives of Plutarch of Chaeronea], transl. Yeghia V. Tovmachan, vol. 3 (Venice, 1833), p. 580.

22. See Tzatur Aghayian, Babken Arakelian, Galust Galoyian, et al., eds., *Hai zhoghovrdi patmutiun* [History of the Armenian People], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1971), pp. 912-13.

23. See Arakelian, *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun*, p. 48.

24. Charles Rollin, *Histoire romaine*, transl. Vrtanes Askerian as *Patmutiun hromeakan*, vol. 4 (Venice, 1817), pp. 688-89.

25. See *Plutarkia Kerovnatsvo Zugakshirk*, vol. 4, p. 138.

26. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 575.

27. See Arakelian, *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun*, p. 47.

28. Important studies in this connection include Ghevond Alishan, *Hin havatk kam hetanosakan kronk hayots* [Ancient Beliefs or Pagan Religions of Armenians] (Venice, 1895); Mkrtich Emin, *Issledovaniya i stat'i N. O. Emina po armyanskoy mifologii, arkheologii i istorii literatury (1858-84)* [Researches and Articles of N. O. Emin on Armenian Mythology, Archeology, and Literary History (1858-84)] (Moscow, 1896); Heinrich Gelzer, *Hetazotutiun hai ditsabanutian* [Inquiry Into Armenian Mythology] (Venice, 1897); Grigor Kapantsian [Ghapantsian], *Khettskiye bogi u armyan* [Hittite Gods Among Armenians] (Yerevan, 1940).

29. The tribes living within the Urartu-Ararat empire considered themselves to be *haldini* or the children of Khaldi, the supreme god of war. And at the same time and place, Haik was worshipped in the same fashion. The Russian linguist and orientalist Meshchaninov claims that the names *Khald* and *Haik* are not only identical in nature but also in linguistic terms, arguing that the *i* in *Haik* was transformed into *l* to produce *Khald*. See I. I. Meshchaninov, "Drevnevanskiy bog Khald-Khaldin" [The God of Ancient Van: Khald-Khaldin], *Vostochnye Zapiski*, no. 1, 1927.

30. See Alishan, *Hin havatk ...*, p. 279.

31. Antoine Meillet, "Sur les termes religieux iraniens en arménien," *Revue des études arméniennes*, no. 1, 1920, pp. 233-36.

32. *Strabon* [Strabo], transl. Hrachia Acharian (Yerevan, 1940), p. 67.

33. Manuk Abeghian, "*Vishapner*" *kochvatz kotoghner n ibrev Astghik-Derketo ditsuhu ardzanner* [The Monuments Called "Vishaps" as Statues to Goddess Astghik-Derketo] (Yerevan, 1941), p. 75.

34. *Tir*, apart from being the scribe of knowledge, also played the role of oneirocritic or interpreter of dreams and soothsayer; according to

Agatangeghos, his sanctum was called *Yerazumuin teghi* (place of oneiromancy). It was there that Tir predicted the future by means of certain signs and symbols.

In ancient times, writing was considered by Armenians, among others, to be a means of sorcery. The words *grogh* (writer or scribe) and *gir* (letter) in their earliest denotations had nothing to do with writing but were rather more invocatory in character. Thence we have the expressions *groghe tani* (may the spirit take you), *groghi bazhin* (the evil demon's share), and *groghi tzotse gna* (may you go to the bosom of the devil) where the word *Grogh* is seen representing the spirit which brings misfortune to people.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. The study of Armenian folk literature began in the middle of the nineteenth century. The following early studies are noteworthy: Mkrtich Emin, *Vepk hnuin Hayastani* [Epics of Ancient Armenia] (Moscow, 1850); Stepan Palasanian, *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian* [History of Armenian Literature], vol. 1 (Tiflis, 1865); Garegin Srvandztiants, *Manana* [Manna]; idem, *Grots u brots* [Notes and Observations]; idem, *Toros Aghbar* [Brother Toros]; Grigor Khalatians, *Armyanskiy epos v istorii Armenii Moiseya Khorenskogo* [The Armenian Epic in Movses Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians*] (Moscow, 1896); Manuk Abeghian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan araspehnere M. Khorenatsu Hayots patmutian mej* [Armenian Folk Legends in M. Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians*] (Vagharshapat, 1899).

2. Studies of those fragments of folk literature which were preserved by early Armenian historians indicate that they have great antiquity and were linguistically formulated in very early times. Though the language used in them was quite similar to Classical Armenian, there are, nevertheless, differences in syntax and structure which suggest that pre-Mesropian Armenian had long endured until it developed to become a polished and fine-tuned language, equivalent to *grabar*. Even in the fragments of folk literature, though, Classical Armenian comes across with a sophistication which is the best evidence for Armenian being a language of several millennia and maturation with its own linguistic system. Furthermore, this development also testifies to the great antiquity of the people who spoke that language and the refined level of their lives and relationships.

3. In ancient Armenia, Armenians utilized basically the same musical instruments as the Hittites and Phrygians—the bronze horn, various string instruments, and the flute. In historical sources there are statements to the effect that music was often an integral part of theatrical performances, as well as

popular and social functions; but, not a single material artifact has been preserved.

4. Palasanian, *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian*, v. 1, p. 190; Paul Vetter, *Haikakan ashkhatasirutiunk* [Armenian Studies], prepared by Hakobos Tashian (Vienna, 1895), p. 127.

5. See Grigor A. Grigorian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan banahiusutiun* [Armenian Folk Literature] (Yerevan, 1980), p. 63.

6. See Manuk Abeghian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan araspelnere*, passim.

7. See Grigorian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan banahiusutiun*, pp. 72-73.

8. See Mkrtich Emin, *Yerkasirutiunner hayots lezvi, grakanutian yev patmutian masin (1840-1855)* [Studies in Armenian Language, Literature, and History, 1840-55] (Moscow, 1898), p. 101; Abeghian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan araspelnere*, p. 61; Palasanian, *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian*, v. 1, p. 131.

9. Grigorian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan banahiusutiun*, p. 74.

10. Palasanian, *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian*, p. 224.

11. *Tvel* is to recount or tell. *Tveliats yergk* were those songs which were not sung, but rather narrated.

12. See Mkrtich Emin, *Issledovaniya i stat'i N. O. Emina po armyanskoy mifologii, arkheologii i istorii literatury (1858-84)* [Researches and Articles of N. O. Emin on Armenian Mythology, Archeology, and Literary History] (Moscow, 1896), p. 295.

13. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia* [Anthology of Armenian Folklore] (Yerevan, 1974), pp. 63-64.

14. Ibid., p. 66.

15. Mkrtich Emin, *Vepk hnuin Hayastani*; idem., *Movses Khorenatsin yev hayots hin vepere* [Movses Khorenatsi and Ancient Armenian Epics] (Tiflis, 1886), p. 39.

16. Khalatiants, *Armyanskiy epos v istorii Armenii*, p. 118.

17. *Hai zhoghovrdi patmutiun* [History of the Armenian People], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1971), p. 483.

18. Artashes Martirosian, *Hayastani nakhnadarian nshanagrere* [Prehistoric Alphabet of Armenia] (Yerevan, 1973); Levon Mirijanian, *Hai banasteghsutian akunknere* [Sources of Armenian Poetry] (Yerevan, 1977), p. 19.

19. In Greek mythology Orion was a brave archer-hunter like Haik. He fell in love with Artemis, goddess of the hunt and was in turn loved by her. Apollo, the brother of Artemis, wishing to put an end to this love, had Orion killed by his sister's hand. When Artemis learned what had taken place, she lamented and had him changed into a star. And Haik, like Orion, was also a valiant hunter who was transformed into a constellation. But the character of Haik was entirely Armenian, and he did not have the mythological nature of the Greek Orion. When the Bible was translated from Greek into Armenian in the

fifth century, the constellation of Orion was rendered as Haik by early Armenian scribes. According to folk traditions which have come down to us in the works of Anania Shirakatsi (seventh century) and Vanakan Vardapet (thirteenth century), Haik was the first calendarist in Armenian history; and the months of the ancient Armenian calendar were named after his sons and daughters. See *Anania Shirakatsu matenagrutiune* [The Works of Anania Shirakatsi] (Yerevan, 1944); Vanakan Vardapet, "Haghags taremtin" [Regarding Year-end], in *Gitakan niuteri zhoghovatzu* [Anthology of Research Papers] (Yerevan, 1941), p. 160. Shirakatsi's *Ashkharhatsuits* was reprinted in 1994 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Robert H. Hewsen.

20. In Georgian mythology the conflict between Haik and Bel took on a different aspect. According to Georgian tradition, the forefathers of the Caucasian peoples were eight sons of Torgom (Tagormah): Haik, Havos, Kartlos (Georgians consider themselves descended from him), Movakan, Bardos, Heros, Caucas, Lekos, and Yegros, who after the fall of the Tower of Babel moved themselves and the entire clan of Torgom to Caucasia, dividing up the land among themselves and becoming subject to Nebrovt (Nimrud, Bel). Haik, who was the eldest and bravest of Torgom's sons and lived in the land of Ararat, after the death of his father proposed to his brothers that they rise up against Nebrovt and free themselves of his yoke. Thus, along with Torgom's titans, Haik went into combat against the superior forces of Nebrovt and defeated them, killing the latter with an arrow and routing the remnants of his army. And it is worthy of note that Georgian literary sources refer to Haik as a titan who, "in size, strength, and courage, never had an equal, neither before the flood nor after." See Levon Melikset-bek, *Vrats aghbiurnere Hayastani yev hayeri masin* [Georgian Sources About Armenia and Armenians], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1934), p. 144.

21. Joseph Markwart, *Die Entstehung und Wiederherstellung der Armenischen Nation* (Berlin, 1918), pp. 66-68.

22. Heinrich Gelzer, *Hetazotutian hai ditsabanutian* [Inquiry Into Armenian Mythology] (Venice, 1897), p. 96.

23. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, pp. 57-58.

24. The name *angegh*, according to the Old Testament, is the Armenian translation of the name of *Nergal*, Hittite god of war.

25. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, p. 53.

26. See Ghevond Alishan, *Hushikk haireniats hayots* [Memoirs of the Land of the Armenians], vol. 2 (Venice, 1870), p. 109.

27. See Mirijanian, *Hai banasteghtzutian akunknere*, p. 90.

28. See Alishan, *Hin havatk* ..., p. 128.

29. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1966), p. 90.

30. Alishan, *Hin havatk* ..., pp. 85-86.

31. K. V. Melik-Pashayian, *Anahit ditsuhu pashtamunke* [The Worship of the Goddess Anahit] (Yerevan, 1963), p. 27.

32. See Asatur Sh. Mnatsakanian, "Ditoghutiunner 'Vardges Mankan' vipakan hatvatzi veraberial" [Observations on the Fictional Episode "Vardges Manuk"], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1976, pp. 217-18.

33. "Knocking upon the door" meant seeking the hand of a girl in marriage but was also related to the idea of building and construction. Ibid.

34. See Hovsep Gaterchian, *Ksenopontia Kiurosi khratu patmutiunk* [Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*] (Vienna, 1843).

35. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, p. 75.

36. Xenophon tells us more about Zaruhi, the wife of Tigran. He reports that Zaruhi was a brave woman who often participated with her husband in numerous military campaigns and was even decorated for that. The Persian commander Cyrus is represented as an intelligent and handsome man. When Tigran attempts to find out what impression Cyrus had left on his wife by asking her if she was not charmed by the Persian commander's handsomeness, Zaruhi answers, "God is my witness that I was not looking at him." "Then where were you looking?" asks the king, to which Zaruhi answers, "Aramazd is my witness ... I was looking at him who said that he would give his whole life so that I would not become a slave." Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* [Cyropaedia] vol. 3, ch. 1, p. 41, cited in Hakob Manandian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1977), p. 393.

37. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, p. 70.

38. Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 1, p. 97.

39. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, p. 79. (The English rendering of this and subsequent quotations from Movses Khorenatsi, where noted, are from *History of the Armenians*, transl. Robert W. Thomson [Cambridge, Mass., 1980], pp. 183-84.)

40. Ibid., p. 83; (Thomson, pp. 190-91).

41. Ibid., p. 84.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., p. 85.

44. Ibid.

45. According to Khachikian, the Armenians called the month of January *Tzkhani*, which means "of the chimney." Levon Khachikian, "Grigor Magistrosi mot Artashes A-i veraberial pahpanvatz vipakan hatvatzi veraberial" [On the Extract of the Epic About Artashes I Preserved by Grigor Magistros], in his *Grakan-banasirakan hetakhuzumner* [Literary-philological Studies], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1946), pp. 405-24.

46. Grigor Magistros, *Tghter* [Epistles], published by Karapet Kostanians (Alexandropol, 1910), #33, p. 87.

47. *Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, p. 88.

48. Ibid., p. 89.
49. Ibid.
50. Movses Khorenatsi, *Patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians], transl., introduction and commentary by Stepan Malkhasiants (Yerevan, 1968), p. 195.
51. Grigorian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan banahiusutiun*, p. 120.
52. Khorenatsi, *Patmutiun hayots*, p. 111.
53. Ibid., p. 87.
54. On the versification of Goghtan songs, see Garegin Zarbhanalian, *Patmutiun hayeren dprutants* [History of Armenian Literature] (Venice, 1865), p. 134; Abraham Zaminian, *Patmutiun hayots hin grakanutian* [History of the Ancient Literature of the Armenians] (Beirut, 1941), p. 26; Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3, p. 83.
55. See Abeghian, "Hai vipakan banahiusutiun" [Armenian Epical Folklore], in his *Yerker*, vol. 1, p. 293.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. There are differing opinions regarding the exact date of Armenia's conversion to Christianity (cf. Arshak Ter-Mikelian, Leo, B. McDermond, Hovsep Gaterchian, Stepan Malkhasiants, Nerses Akinian, Hakob Manandian, and others). Based on different sources, the date is placed from 219 (Akinian, "Surb Grigor Lusavorich" [Saint Gregory the Illuminator], *Handes Amsoria*, 1949, pp. 3-58) to 316, date of the edict of Milan (A. Anninskiy, *Drevnearmyanskiye istochniki kak istoricheskie istochniki* [Ancient Armenian Sources as Historical Sources] [Odessa, 1899], p. 80). Present-day research places the conversion to Christianity between 298 and 304.

2. Thadeus and Bartholomew spread the gospel around Ararat and Vaspurakan. Voguhi, the converted sister of King Sanatruk, the commander Terentianos, and Bartholomew himself were all martyred around the year 66; while Thadeus was martyred with Princess Sandukht, daughter of Sanatruk, in 46. See Mkrtych Avgerian, *Liakatar vark yev vkayabanutiun srbots* [Complete Lives and Martyrology of the Saints], vol. 9 (Venice, 1813); B. Mirimanian, *Hayastani arajin lusavorichner S. Tadeos yev S. Bardughimeos* [The First Illuminators of Armenia: Saint Thadeus and Saint Bartholomew] (Tiflis, 1887).

3. "V kayabanutiun yev giut nshkharats S. Tadei arakelo yev Sandkhto kusi" [Martyrology and Discovery of the Relics of the Apostle Saint Thadeus and the Virgin Sandukht], in *Soperk haikakank* [Armenian Writings], vol. 8 (Venice, 1853).

4. Gregory the Illuminator was ordained archbishop in Caesarea in 302, thus becoming the first patriarch of the Armenian church. He demolished pagan temples and built churches on the rubble and appointed his fellow Christian brothers who had travelled with him as ministers. He baptized people everywhere. King Trdat, his family, and the rest of the royal court received Christian baptism in the Aratzani River. Gregory the Illuminator embarked on a widespread mission of construction and ordination. In Vagharshapat he began construction of a cathedral where the pagan temple of Sandaramet had once stood. See Maghakia Ormanian, *Azgapatum* [National History], Part 1 (Constantinople, 1912), pp. 96-98.

Grigor Lusavorich was also engaged in the internal organization of the Armenian church. He devised religious services, orders, ceremonies, and liturgies. He offered church positions to former pagan priests. He spread his missionary activities far and wide, reached Georgia and Caucasian Albania, and converted these countries to Christianity. Advanced in years, he relinquished his position to his son Aristakes, became a hermit, and spent the remainder of his life in a mountainous cave in the province of Daranaghik (where Mane, a member of the Hripsimants order, had retired and passed away). He died in obscurity in that cave in 325 or 326 and was buried in the village of Tordan. See Khorenatsi, *Patmutiun hayots*, pp. 230-31. The Armenian edition of Agatangeghos's book claims that Grigor Lusavorich was a Parthian, son of Anak, whereas the Arabic and Greek versions say he was Greek.

5. Artashes Martirosian, *Mashtots (patma-knnakan tesutiun)* [Mashtots: A Historical and Critical Survey] (Yerevan, 1982), p. 16.

6. *Nestorianism*, whose founder was Patriarch Nestor of Constantinople, implied a new interpretation of Christianity, and spread in Syria in the fifth century. Unlike more "orthodox" Christians, Nestorians believed that the divine and human natures of Jesus did not become one. They existed in relative unity, meaning that Jesus was a mortal who by means of the Holy Spirit was made into a saint and elevated to the stature of "Son of God." In 431, at the Third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus, Nestorianism was anathematized and persecuted.

7. Karekin Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church* (London, 1965).

8. Martirosian, *Mashtots*, pp. 107-8.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

10. At the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451), monophysites were criticized and dyophysism adopted. The churches of Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Ephesus, and Alexandria rejected the decisions of Chalcedon and tried to secede from the Church of Byzantium. At the Dvin conference of 506, the Armenians once again rejected the decisions of Chalcedon and declared themselves to be monophysites. They rejected dyophysism—the duality of

Christ's nature, perfectly human and perfectly divine—and asserted that Christ has only one, divine nature, in which the human is irrevocably and independently united with the divine. In the Ecumenical Council of 553 Sahak Partev's epistle on the issue of monophysitism was read, whereby the Armenian Church and Gregory the Illuminator took their respected places in the calendar of the Ecumenical Church.

11. Did Armenians have letters and literature before Mesrop Mashtots? There are varying opinions on this subject. Unfortunately, Koriun's *Vark Mashtotsi* [Life of Mashtots] does not address this important question, leaving a gap to be filled by numerous other sources and studies. The linguist Hrachia Acharian published *Hayots grere* [Armenian Script] in which, after detailed examination of the issue of pre-Mesropian literature, he concludes that prior to Mesrop, Armenians did not have either a script or literature in their own language. They wrote in Persian, Greek, and Syriac. Acharian insisted that the only author of the Armenian alphabet was Mesrop Mashtots (Daniel's script was not Armenian), who after studying the alphabets of other languages and following the Greek example invented a unique Armenian script. His conclusions are accepted by other Armenologists (see Hakob Manandian, Manuk Abeghian, Stepan Malkhasiants, and Edvard Aghayian) who reject the existence of Armenian writing, as well as the possibility of Armenian literature written in Persian, Greek, or Syriac letters, yet confirm that there was a body of literature in foreign languages. Nevertheless, some specialists see the possible existence of a unique Armenian literature in the pagan period (see Anton M. Garagashian, Nikoghayos Mar, Abraham Zaminian, Arakel Arakelian, and Mkrtich Mkrian). Regarding the creation of the Armenian alphabet, there have been various opinions expressed by Armenian and non-Armenian researchers. See Ya. B. Shnitser, *Illyustrirovannaya vseobshchaya istoriya pismen* [Illustrated General History of Writing] (St. Petersburg, 1903); Friedrich Müller, *Über den Ursprung der armenischen Schrift* (Vienna, 1865); Mkrtich Emin, *Issledovaniya i stat'i N. O. Emina* (Moscow, 1896); etc. The debate regarding existence or absence of pre-Mesropian literature will certainly continue.

12. Manandian, *Knnakan tesutium hai zhoghovrdi patmutian*, vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1957), p. 246.

13. See Martirosian, "Greri giuti sharzharitneri harts shurj" [On the Question of Motives for the Invention of Script], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 7, 1964, p. 79.

14. Martirosian mentions a work by Teodoros Mopsvestatsi which argues against Persian Zoroastrianism from a Christian standpoint and addresses it to Mastubios, meaning Mashtots. Martirosian concludes that Mopsvestatsi's book was, in fact, commissioned by Mashtots because the latter deemed it necessary to expose Zoroastrianism by means of an ideological attack on this Persian religion. Thus, Martirosian seeks to emphasize that Mashtots's activities

were not merely confined to evangelization but had also political motivations (Martirosian, *Mashtots*, pp. 172-73.) This question is clarified by Adonts in his *Mashtots yev nra ashakertnere est otar aghbiurneri* [Mashtots and His Students According to Non-Armenian Sources] (Vienna, 1925). Cf. *Mesrop Mashtots, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu* [Mesrop Mashtots: Collection of Essays] (Yerevan, 1962).

15. Koriun, *Vark Mashtotsi* (Yerevan, 1962), p. 101.

16. The letters *o* and *fe* were taken from Latin and added to the Armenian alphabet in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

17. See Acharian, *Hayots grere* (Vienna, 1928), p. 271. Abrahamian finds that of the thirty-six Armenian letters, twenty are taken from the Greek, three from Aramaic (*liun, ken, nu*), and one from Syriac (*tza*). See Ashot Abrahamian, *Hayots gir yev grchutium* [Alphabet and Scripture of the Armenians] (Yerevan, 1973), p. 49.

18. See Koriun, *Vark Mashtotsi*, pp. 110-16; Khorenatsi, *Patmutiun hayots*, p. 294. In the fourth and fifth centuries, the Georgians and Caucasian Albanians were progressing along the same path of establishing Christianity, letters, and literature as were the Armenians and doing so under the influence of Armenian culture. "Here," writes Korneli Kekelidze, "the church became of such a nature as existed in neighboring Armenia. ... Even the Georgian alphabet ... was formed and finalized with the participation of Armenian scholars.... The formation of our literature, in the original sense of the word, was accomplished by the proximity and influence of Armenians." He states that even Greek and Syrian influences filtered into Georgia through Armenian literature, "*via Armeniaca*" (Korneli Kekelidze, *K'art'uli literaturis istoria (dzveli meerloba)* [History of Georgian Literature] [Tbilisi, 1929]), pp. 37-40.

There are several studies and opinions regarding Albanian letters and literature. Akaki Shanidze, *Novootkrytyy alfavit kavkazskikh albansev i ego znachenie dlya nauki* [The Newly Discovered Alphabet of the Caucasian Albanians and its Significance for Scholarship] (Tbilisi, 1938); Nerses Akinian, *S. Mashtots vardapet* [Saint Mashtots Vardapet] (Vienna, 1949); Asatur Mnatsakanian, *Aghvanits ashkharhi grakanutian hartseri shurje* [On Issues Regarding the Literature of Albania] (Yerevan, 1966); etc.

According to Koriun and Khorenatsi, Mashtots created the Albanian alphabet, with the help of a local elder by the name of Benjamin, for the largest Albanian tribe, the Gargaratsis. Certain records of this alphabet are preserved. It had fifty-two letters, but disappeared after the seventh century due to lack of use. Twenty-six tribes lived in Albania, all speaking different languages. In 387, when Persia annexed the northeast Armenian provinces of Utik and Artsakh to Albania, the official language of the country became Armenian, and the Albanian Church came under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Church.

19. For the hymns of Mashtots, see chapter 7 of the present volume.

20. For the hymns of Sahak Partev, see chapter 7 of the present volume.

21. Joseph Markwart, *Patmutiun hayeren nshanagreru yev varuts S. Mashtotsi* [History of the Armenian Script and Life of Saint Mashtots], transl. Aristakes Vardanian (Vienna, 1913), p. 8.

22. In subsequent centuries a rich literature in different foreign languages was produced, employing the Mesropian alphabet. At various periods in history, Armenians have migrated to other countries. Wherever they have gone, they have learned, out of necessity, the language of the host country. These are some of the languages they have used: Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Georgian, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, and Hungarian. There is an important corpus of literature in foreign languages, particularly in Turkish, using Armenian script, created during the 400 years of Ottoman domination. The phenomenon can be observed in Crimea and Ukraine. In Poland, however, Armenians used the Polish script to write Armenian words. Armenians lived in these countries and mastered the host countries' spoken languages, but they wrote in and read the Mesropian alphabet. There are, no doubt, practical and ideological reasons behind this phenomenon.

It is a known fact that in whatever language a given nation's Holy Book is written, that language and its alphabet acquire a sacred status. The Slavs who were followers of the Orthodox church, used the Slavic alphabet; the Catholic church employed the Latin alphabet; whereas Muslims read the *Koran* in Arabic, that is, the language in which it was originally written. See Hakob Papazian, "Mesropatar ailalezu grakanutian masin" [On Literature in Foreign Languages Written in Mesropian Script], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 7, 1964, p. 211. Use of the Armenian alphabet abroad has served the dual purpose of preserving the language of the Bible, the national religion, and the language of the national culture in its written form. This heritage, comprised of thousands of pages (concerning history, aesthetics and art, memoirs, social issues, biblical literature, and lexicography), is indicative of the perfection and flexibility of the Mesropian alphabet which can authentically express the phonetic, idiomatic, and grammatical constructions of the above mentioned languages.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. James Hastings, *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing With Its Language, Literature, and a Content Including the Biblical Theology* (New York: Scribners, 1898-1904), vol. 1, p. 152.

2. The first Armenian translation of the Old Testament was done from the Syriac *Peshitta* version, while Tatian's *Diatessaron* served as the original for the first Armenian translation of the New Testament.

The *Bible* as a text consists of the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament (thirty-nine books) was written in the eighth to second centuries B.C. in old Hebrew and partly in Aramaic, and the New Testament (twenty-seven books) in the first to second centuries A.D. in Classical Greek. The Old and New Testaments contain the fundamental principles and legends of the Jewish and Christian religions as well as a mass of historical, traditional, ethnological, legal, moral, philosophical, and lyrical material which has had a large influence on the development of world culture, especially in the West. Only Armenians have named the Bible *Astvatzashunch*, "Breath of God." Names derived from the Greek word "Biblia," which means books, are used in most languages. The fifth century A.D. authors Koriun, Movses Khorenatsi, and Ghazar Parpetsi wrote about the Armenian translation of the Bible. It was printed for the first time by Voskan Yerevantsi and Matteos Tzaretsi in 1666-1668 in Amsterdam. The best publications of the Bible as critical texts are those of Hovhannes Zohrapian (Venice, 1805) and Arsen Bagratuni (Venice, 1860). The 1805 Zohrapian edition of the Bible was reprinted in 1984 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Claude E. Cox. Regarding the Armenian Bible, see Hagop Anasian, *Manr Yerker* [Minor Works] (Los Angeles, 1987), pp. 1-178.

3. Nikoghayos Adonts, "La Bible arménienne et sa portée historique." See *Célébration solennelle du quinzième centenaire de la traduction de la Bible* (Paris, 1938), p. 48.

4. Since medieval Armenian literature was the product of a Christian culture, material from the Bible was also used for artistic purposes in sculpture, miniature painting, painting, and music. In the third to seventh centuries, images of the Old and New Testaments found a place in the tomb of Aghts, on walls and domes of Armenian churches (the monasteries of Aghtamar, Aruch, Talin, Tatev, Haghbat), in colored decorative painting in Armenian manuscripts (mainly topics from the gospels after the twelfth century), in psalms, *Mashtotses* (Armenian book of rituals), missals, and so forth. Psalms and canticles also became material for choir services.

5. The Christian religion, which took birth in the Hellenistic world, did not have a sacred alphabet as did the Iranian *Avesta* (written in the Old Iranian language called Avestan) or the *Vedas* of Indian Brahmanism written in Sanskrit, or the Muslim Holy Book, the *Koran*, written in Classical Arabic. The Christian spirit was multilingual which aided in the rapid spread of this ideology and translations of the holy scriptures. The Syriac Bible (*Peshitta*), Latin Vulgate, and Armenian Bible, which came into existence during the second to fifth centuries A.D., were written in different languages. The use of a language

for propagation of a faith sanctified that script. The *grabar* used for translation of the Bible is still used today as the language for church and religious literature for Armenians, as Latin in the West.

6. The dialect of Airarat, political and religious center of Armenia, became a literary language in the fifth century. It was used by Armenian historians, as well as by Mashtots and Sahak Partev. The old Armenian literary language, which is called *grabar*, is classified into two major periods. It is considered classical during the fifth to eleventh centuries and post-classical in the eleventh to nineteenth centuries. During the first period *grabar* was a literary and spoken language. Armenian of the first half of the century, which is known by the epithet of the "Golden Age," changed during the sixth to eighth centuries under influence of the Hellenizing school and after the eighth century became mixed with the vernacular. In the Middle Ages, *grabar* was primarily preserved in religious and church forums and ceased to be the dominant literary language. It survived until the beginning of the twentieth century in certain religious and Armenological centers, mainly at the Mkhitarist monasteries in Venice and Vienna.

7. See Garegin Zarbhanalian, *Matenadaran haikakan targmanutiants nakhniats (dar IV-XIII)* [Bibliotheca of Ancient Armenian Translations (Fourth-Thirteenth Centuries)] (Venice, 1889).

8. The latest classification of the Hellenizing school's translations, performed by Sen Arevshatian, is composed of the following sequences: 450-460 A.D., 480-510, 510-600, and 610-710. See Sen Arevshatian, *Formirovanie filosofskoy nauki v drevney Armenii (5-6 vv.)* [The Development of Philosophical Sciences in Ancient Armenia, Fifth-Sixth Centuries] (Yerevan, 1973).

For a list of Armenian translations carried out from invention of the alphabet until the 460s, which concludes with the period of the development of a distinctive translational literature created with Classical Armenian (*grabar*), see Sen Arevshatian "Hnaguin haikakan targmanutiunnere yev nrants patma-mshakutayin nshanakutiune" [The Oldest Armenian Translations and Their Historical-Cultural Significance] *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1973, pp. 27-28.

9. *Patristics* is a branch of theology which embraces the writings of early and medieval Christian fathers which are referred to by the Church to establish the Christian creed. The lives and works of Holy Fathers, aside from their religious and ecclesiastical significance, have played a large role in the history of Greek, Assyrian, Roman, as well as Armenian literature and have left an influence on later literature. These men, who received a brilliant education, brought to bear their entire store of knowledge of the classical past and their abilities on serving Christian truth and the Church. Although it was the question of Christian faith which was important to them, nonetheless their works often

scintillated with resplendid logical and literary grace. In the Western world, these works of the Christian fathers until A.D. 180 were read in Greek, while after the third century Latin became the international tongue of the western Church and patristic literature. The first collections of the Holy Fathers appear in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries (R. Ceillier, *Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques*, vols. 1-23, 1729-1763 (to 1250); L. de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastiques des six premiers siècles*, vols. 1-16, 1693-1712, etc.).

Patristics was enriched with many new studies and monographs when a series of Syrian, Armenian, Georgian, and Egyptian manuscripts of early Christian times were brought to light in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

10. Many Armenian and non-Armenian scholars have studied the philological, linguistic, and philosophical legacy of the Hellenizing school and published its texts (Harutjun Avgerian, Arsen Bagratuni, Mkrtych Avgerian, Hovsep Gaterchian, Arsen Aitenian, Anton Garagashian, Hakobos Tashian, Nerses Akinian, Aristakes Vardanian, Hakob Manandian, Arusiak Muradian, Frederick Conybeare, A. Baumgartner, W. Bousset, Victor Rosen, Frederic Neumann, and others). The Hellenizing school's translations, language construction, bias, and local contemporary issues have been given different explanations and interpretations in critical literature.

11. See Georg Jahukian, *Kerakanakan yev ughghagrakan ashkhatutiunnere hin yev mijnatarian Hayastanum* [Grammatical and Orthographical Works in Ancient and Medieval Armenia] (Yerevan, 1954), pp. 53-61.

12. See Nikoghayos Adonts, *Dionisiy Frakiyskiy i armyanskie tolkovateli* [Dionysius Thrax and Armenian Commentators] (Petrograd, 1915).

13. The translation of Theon of Alexandria's rhetorical work is also noteworthy for its preservation of the last four chapters lost from Theon's text in the original Greek.

14. See Arevshatian, "Hnaguin haikakan targmanutiunnere yev nrants patma-mshakutayin nshanakutiune," p. 32.

15. See Koriun, Mambre, Davit, *Matenagrutiunk* [Koriun, Mambre, Davit: Writings] (Vienna, 1833); *Tramakhosutiunk Pghatoni imastasiri* [Symposia of Plato the Philosopher] (Venice, 1877).

16. See Frederick C. Conybeare, *A Collation With the Ancient Armenian Versions of the Greek Text of Aristotle's Categories* (Oxford, 1892).

17. See Koriun, Mambre, Davit, *Matenagrutiunk* (Venice, 1833).

18. Sen Arevshatian, "Pghatoni yerkeri hayeren targmanutian zhamanake" [The Time of Translation of Plato's Works Into Armenian], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 10, 1971, pp. 7-20.

19. *Tramakhosutiunk Pghatoni imastasiri*, Venice, 1877. *Pghaton, Minovs, kam haghags orinats* [Plato, Minos, or on Laws] (Venice, 1890).

20. *Eusebii Pamphili Caesariensis episcopi Chronicon bipartitum* (Venice, 1818).

21. Hakob Manandian published Nonnus's text in "Nonnus, Die Scholien zu fünf Reden des Gregor von Nazianz," *Zeitschrift für armenische Philologie*, 1903.

22. The *Armenian of the Hellenizing school* is considered in Armenian philology a post-classical literary language, a deviation from Classical Armenian. Its influence lasted three centuries (fifth to eighth) on Armenian literature, and then gradually disappeared. The artificial use of grammatical gender, certain declensional forms, certain inappropriate methods and tenses for the conjugation of verbs, and insertion of the dual number were gradually discarded from the Armenian language and no longer appear in later centuries.

23. Vazgen K. Chaloyan, *Hayots pilisopayutian patmutiun* [History of Armenian Philosophy] (Yerevan, 1975), p. 60.

24. Yervand Ter-Minasiants, *Hayots yekeghetsu haraberutiunnere asori yekeghetsineri het* [The Relationship of the Armenian Church with Assyrian Churches] (Ejmiatzin, 1908), p. 122.

25. See Mayis Avdalbegian, *Hai gegharvestakan ardzaki skzbnavorume*, [The Beginnings of Literary Armenian Prose] (Yerevan, 1971), p. 42.

26. The *gnostic* teachings are philosophic conceptions which originated in the Roman Empire during the first to third centuries A.D.

The Hellenization of the East made fusion of eastern religions with Greek philosophy easier. Later, this situation had far reaching consequences. During the first to third centuries the union of Christianity and ancient eastern faiths and paganism was transformed into *gnosticism*. As a philosophical teaching this then spread throughout the West and East and in the second century spawned a literature greater than that of orthodox theology.

It is conjectured that the gnostic sect called *Marcionism* also found a certain acceptance in Armenia, where the fifth-century Armenian philosopher Yeznik Koghbatsi devoted a separate chapter to it in his *Refutation of Sects*.

27. Ter-Minasiants, loc. cit.

28. Hakobos Tashian, *Vardapetutiun Arakelots anvaverakan kanonats matiane* [The Apocryphal Canon Book *Didache*] (Vienna, 1898).

29. A group of European scholars have written about Armeno-Syrian literary and cultural ties, including Joseph Ernst Renan (*Histoire générale et système comparé*, Paris, 1958), Victor Langlois ("Etudes sur les sources de l'histoire d'Arménie de Moïse de Khoren," *Académie Impériale des Sciences, Mélanges asiatiques*, vol. 4, 1861, pp. 293-368), Félix Nève (*l'Arménie chrétienne et sa littérature*, Louvain, 1886), and R. Duval, ("Histoire d'Edesse," *La littérature syriaque*, Paris, 1907), and others.

30. The first publishers and researchers of Armenian hagiographic literature were Mkhitarist monks. Vardapet Mkrtich Avgerian, who from 1810-1815 published his voluminous *Liakatar vark yev vkayabanutium srbots* [Complete Lives and Martyrologies of the Saints] collection (vols. 1-12, Venice) which contains works written in the above mentioned literary form up to the eighteenth century, left a great legacy. Avgerian carried out an immense amount of work on primary sources by annotating that legacy and at the same time revealing many hagiographies and martyrologies translated from Syriac, Greek, and other languages whose original texts had disappeared. The Mkhitarists also published the valuable works *Soperk haikakank* [Armenian Writings] (vols. 1-22, Venice, 1853-61, vols. 23-24, 1933-34) and *Vark srbots harants yev kaghakavarutiunk srbots hatentir kaghialk i charentrats* [Lives of the Holy Fathers and Conduct of the Saints Collected from Select Homilies] (vols. 1-2, Venice, 1874). From the perspective of philology and scholarship on primary sources, the monks Ghevond Alishan and Galust Ter-Mkrtchian have played a great role in the study of hagiology. The latter published the compilation *Abraham khostovanoghi Vkaik Arevelits* [Abraham the Confessor's *Martyrs of the East*] (Ejmiatzin, 1921) as well as individual martyrologies. The scholars Alfred Gutschmidt, Paul de Lagarde, Hovsep Gaterchian, Hakobos Tashian, Nikoghayos Adonts, Garegin Zarbhanalian, Nerses Akinian, Hakob Manandian, Barsegh Sargisian, and others have also dealt with issues of early Christian literature and literature in translation.

31. According to the latest evidence, there are over twenty original Armenian *vitae* and about two hundred martyrologies preserved today. See Knarik S. Ter-Davtian, "Vkayabanutian zhanri zargatsume hai matenagrutian mej" [Development of the Martyrology Genre in Armenian Literature], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1982, p. 22.

32. *Yevsebios Kesaratsvo patmutiun yekeghetsvo heghial hasorvuin i hai hingerord daru ...* [Eusebius the Caesarean's *Ecclesiastical History* Rendered From Syriac Into Armenian in the Fifth Century ...] (Venice, 1877), p. v.

33. *Pavstos Biuzandatsvo Patmutiun hayots* [Pavstos Buzand's *History of the Armenians*] (Venice, 1832), p. 36.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 218-23.

36. See Auguste Carrière, *Abgaru zruitse Movses Khorenatsvo Patmutian mej* [The Tale of Abgar in Movses Khorenatsi's *History*] (Vienna, 1897).

37. Galust Ter-Mkrtchian, *Agatangeghosi aghbiurnerits* [Of the Source of Agatangeghos] (Vagharshapat, 1896), p. 5.

38. Grigor Khalatiants, "Yegishei aghbiurneri artiv" [Regarding the Sources of Yeghishe], *Handes Amsoria*, no. 4, 1895, p. 115.

39. The first Ecumenical Church council took place in 325 in the city of Nicaea in Bythinia with the participation of 318 bishops. The Armenian Catholicos, Gregory the Illuminator's son Aristakes, was present on behalf of Armenians. The Arian question was examined in the council. Arius, founder of this teaching, and his followers did not accept that Christ as son of God was eternal like his Father but believed that Christ in his essence differed from his Father and thus was not identical with Him. Arianism, both in Nicaea and the ecumenical Council of Constantinople in 381, was declared a heresy and the obligatory principle of Christian churches was formulated—the *Creed*, the single essence of the Father and Son. In the middle of the fourth century, Arianism was preached in Asia Minor under the leadership of Eustathios of Sebastia.

40. Nerses Akinian, *Ktsurdk S. Yepremi Khorin Asorvo* [Antiphones of St. Yeprem Khuri the Assyrian] (Vienna, 1957), p. XXI.

41. *S. Yepremi matenagrutiunk* [St. Yeprem's Works], vol. I-II (Venice, 1836).

42. *Movsisi Khorenatsvo Patmutiun hayots* [Movses Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians*] (Tiflis, 1913), p. 226, 236, 270.

43. Ghazar Parpetsi, *Patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians] (Tiflis, 1904), pp. 3-4. This edition was reprinted in 1986 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Dickran Kouymjian.

44. Nerses the Great's hagiography has been preserved in the pages of fifth-century historian Pavstos Buzand's *History of the Armenians*, while Vahan Goghhtnatsi's *vita* reached us through numerous manuscript versions (see *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 13, "Voghbek vashn chariatsn ashkharhis hayots yev vkayabanutiun srbuin Vahana Goghhtnatsvo" [Lament for the Evils in the Land of Armenians and Martyrology of Saint Vahan Goghhtnatsi] (Venice, 1854).

45. According to Avdalbegian's study, there are about 150 of the abbreviated copies of this *vita* in Yerevan's Matenadaran (see Avdalbegian, *op. cit.*, p. 143).

46. The story of the martyrdom of the apostle Thadeus and virgin Sandukht has reached us in several versions (see *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 8, "Vkeyabanutiun yev giud nshkharats S. Tadei arakelo yev Sandkhto kusi" [Martyrology and Discovery of the Relics of the Apostle Thadeus and Virgin Sandukht] (Venice, 1854).

47. See Agatangeghos, *Patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians], vernacular translation, introduction, and annotations by Aram Ter-Ghevondian (Yerevan, 1977), pp. 45-47, 58-62.

48. See *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 13 (Venice, 1854), p. 43.

49. Thirteenth-century writer Vardan Areveltsi is recognized as author of the hagiography of Sahak Partev (published for the first time in *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 2, Venice, 1853).

50. *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 9 (Venice, 1853), p. 20.

51. Nikoghayos Mar, *Opicanie gruzinskikh rukopicey Sinayskogo monastyrya* [Description of Georgian Manuscripts at the Sinai Monastery] (Leningrad, 1940), pp. 99-275.

52. See *Movses Kaghankatvatsvo Patmutiun Aghavnits ashkharhi* [Movses Kaghankatvatsi's *History of the Land of the Albanians*], published by Mkrtich Emin (Moscow, 1860), pp. 255-57.

53. See *Liakatar vark yev vkayabanutiun srbots*, vol. 2, pp. 124-30.

54. See *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 19 (Venice, 1854), pp. 85-96.

55. *Ibid.*, vol. 12 (1854), pp. 61-86.

56. The author of *Refutation of the Council of Chalcedon*, Timothy Aelurus, became one of the fathers of the *monophysite* Egyptian order as a result of his religious convictions. He was exiled for many years because of his views and activity; but, after his death in 477, he entered the ranks of famous monophysite fathers.

57. Letters were added to the *Book of Epistles* in later centuries, raising the total number to ninety-eight. They range chronologically from the fifth to thirteenth centuries in origin. Decisions of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon and the sects of Arius and Nestor are disavowed in these letters, while independence of the Armenian Church is defended.

58. See Hakob Anasian, *Haikakan matenagitutiun, V-XVIII dd.* [Armenian Bibliography, Fifth to Eighteenth Centuries] (Yerevan, 1959), pp. xxxixl-xliii.

59. The Mkhitarists of Venice have published three collections of Armenian apocrypha: the first, *Ankanon girk Hin ktakaranats* [Apocrypha of the Old Testament] (1896); the second, *Ankanon girk Nor ktakaranats* [Apocrypha of the New Testament] (1898); and the third, *Ankanon girk Arakelakank* [Apocrypha of the Apostles] (1904).

60. Movses Khorenatsi, *Patmutiun Hayots* [History of the Armenians], translation, introduction, and commentary by Stepanos Malkhasiants (Yerevan, 1968), p. 81.

61. *Ankanon girk Hin ktakaranats*, vol. 1 (Venice, 1896), p. 323.

62. See Avdalbegian, *Hai gegharvestakan ...*, pp. 166-74.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Koriun's work was first published in Venice (1883) and was translated into German, French, English, and Russian.

2. Koriun, *Vark Mashtotsi* [Life of Mashtots], translation, introduction, and commentary by Manuk Abeghian (Yerevan, 1941), p. 53. This edition was

reprinted in 1985 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Krikor H. Maksoudian.

3. Ibid., p. 63.

4. The oldest accounts in regard to Agatangeghos have to do with fifth-century historian Ghazar Parpetsi, who considers the first chronicler in Armenian history to be "Blessed Agatangeghos," whose monograph is known also as *Patmutiun yev vark S. Grigori* [The Story and Life of St. Gregory]. The view held by Ghazar Parpetsi, Movses Khorenatsi, and other Armenian historians that Agatangeghos lived and wrote in the fourth century was upheld until the second half of the eighteenth century. Grigor Marzvantsi, in 1709, published Agatangeghos's *History* for the first time in Constantinople; it was followed, in 1762, by Johan Stilting's publication of the Greek version of the text in Belgium. It is Stilting who cast doubt upon authenticity of the evidence presented in the introduction of Agatangeghos. The first Armenian critical edition of Agatangeghos's *History* appeared in Venice (1835). Subsequently, by means of comparative analysis—thanks to multi-language variant editions of Agatangeghos—it became possible to publish critical-scholarly studies concerning his work. Victor Langlois (Langlois, *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie*, Paris, 1867), who translated and published Agatangeghos's work in French, expressed doubt on whether the author was a layman from the fourth century; he would rather view the author as a fifth century cleric. As for the manuscript, he did not reject its Greek origin, while the Armenian he considered a mere translation. Norair Biuzandatsi, too (*Koriun vardapet yev norin targmanutiunk*) [Koriun and His Translations] (Tiflis, 1900), considered Agatangeghos to be Greek and his history a translation from Greek by Koriun. Certain scholars also expressed doubt regarding the name Agatangeghos itself; not considering it a proper name, they explained literally the Greek compound "agatos" and "angelos" meaning "kind angel," "bearer of good news," that is, messenger of good tidings, evangelist, meaning to St. Gregory. Alfred Gutschmid (Gutschmid, *Agathangelos*, Leipzig, 1877) is in agreement with these views. He considered the Armenian edition to be the original and the Greek its translation done in the sixth century. He also established that Agatangeghos had been influenced by Koriun and not the other way around. Other scholars such as Paul de Lagard, Nikoghayos Mar, Hakobos Tashian, Gerard Garitte, Nikoghayos Adonts, Barsegh Sargisian, Manuk Abeghian, Grigor Khalatians, Karo Melik-Ohanjanian, Aram Ter-Ghevondian, Galust Ter-Mkrtchian, and Guy Lafontaine have also studied Agatangeghos's work.

5. It has been assumed that the teachings and life of Saint Gregory as well as martyrology of the Hripsimian maidens were available originally in Greek and that only during the fifth century were they translated into Armenian

(Tashian, *Agatangeghos ar Georga asori yepiskoposin* [Agatangeghos's Letter to Bishop Georg the Assyrian] (Vienna, 1891), pp. 86-87).

6. Movses Khorenatsi, *Patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians], translation, introduction, and commentary by Stepan Malkhasiants (Yerevan, 1968), pp. 202, 208-209, 224.

7. Aram Ter-Ghevondian, *Agatangeghosi arabakan nor khmbagru-tiune* [Agatangeghos's New Arabic Edition] (Yerevan, 1968), p. 16.

8. *La version grecque ancienne du livre arménien d'Agathange*, critical edition by Guy Lafontaine (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1973).

9. Agatangeghos, *Patmutiun hayots*, translation into the vernacular, introduction, and commentary by Aram Ter-Ghevondian (Yerevan, 1977), p. 81. The 1909 Tiflis edition of this work, edited by Kaloust Ter Mkrtichian and Stepan Kanayan, was reprinted in 1980 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Robert W. Thomson.

10. The part entitled *Vardapetutiun* (The Teachings of St. Gregory) in the *History* of Agatangeghos (sect. 215-715) has been translated into English by Robert Thomson in 1970 and, together with an adjoining study, published separately (*The Teaching of St. Gregory: An Early Armenian Catechism*, translation and commentary by Robert W. Thomson [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970]).

11. Agat'angeghos, *History of the Armenians*, translation and commentary by Robert W. Thomson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976), pp. 135-37.

12. Grigor Grigorian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan banahiusutiun* [Armenian Folklore] (Yerevan, 1980), p. 174.

13. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1968), p. 185.

14. Investigations regarding Pavstos Buzand's personality and nationality, his working language and era have been conducted since the end of the nineteenth century. Some critics—among whom Ghazar Parpetsi was perhaps the first, and later, Mikayel Chamchian, Mkrtich Avgerian, and others—have expressed an unfavorable opinion about Buzand's *History*, considering his work worthless and his nationality Greek.

Pavstos's *History of the Armenians* was praised for the first time by French Armenologist Antoine J. de Saint-Martin. According to him, Buzand's work gives a broader description of Armenian life in the fourth century than does Movses Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians*.

Hovsep Gaterchian asserts (*Handes Amsoria*, March, 1889, pp. 40-43) that Buzand was, in fact, of Armenian origin, and that he tried to adopt the name of a Greek chronicler. The critic praises Buzand for transcribing Armenian folk tales, fables, and traditional customs despite the many distortions of historical facts and legends. Gaterchian assesses Buzand's work from philological, historical, and geographical perspectives.

Garegin Zarbhanalian (*Patmutiun hayeren dprutants* [History of Armenian Literature], Venice, 1865) believes Buzand was a Greek writer and considers the *History*'s third section as the first and the first and second sections as works of Labubna and Agatangeghos.

Alfred Gutschmid (*Über die Glaubwürdigkeit der Armenischen Geschichte des Moses von Khoren*, Leipzig, 1876) calls Buzand a "real historiographer" who had originally written his history in Greek, the Armenian being a translation. A similar opinion was expressed by Anton Garagashian (*Knnakan patmutiun hayots* [Critical History of the Armenians], vol. 1 [Constantinople, 1880]) and Norair Biuzandatsi ("Knnaser," 1887).

Yeghishe Matatian's *Pavstos Buzand* (Vienna, 1890) is an even more authoritative study, where the author of *History of the Armenians* is presented as a Greek, who lived in the fourth century and was witness to the events reported. He considers the original text to be Greek because he finds Greek words and a Hellenistic style, translated into Armenian in the fifth century. Matatian highly praises the work's diction, philological content, topographics, and presentation of the country's internal relations.

Others who have dealt with problems raised by Buzand's *History* include Mar ("O nachal'noy istorii Armenii Anonima" [Anonymous Early History of the Armenians] *Vizant. Vremennik*, 1894), Tashian (*Handes Amsoria*, March, 1890, pp. 68-71), Alishan (*Hayapatum* [History of Armenians], Venice, 1901), Adonts ("Nachal'naya istoria Armenii u Sebeosa" [Early Armenian History in Eusebius], *Vizant. Vremennik*, 1901) and many others.

According to academician Malkhasiants (*Pavstos Buzand*, Yerevan, 1947), who has translated *Hayots patmutiun* from Classical Armenian to Modern Armenian with annotations and a broad introduction, the scientific-analytic examination of sources reaches the conclusion that Buzand's *History* was written in the seventies of the fifth century in Armenian, and by an Armenian author—an opinion that has since gained scientific validity and wider acceptance.

One of the most recent researchers of Buzand's work is Nina Garsoïan, who has translated and commented on this opus (*The Epic Histories: Buzandaran Patmutiunk*, Cambridge, 1989).

15. See Hrant Tamrazian, *Hai knnadatutiun, grakan mtki akunknere yev dzevavorume, 5-rd dar* [Armenian Criticism: Sources and Development of Literary Thought, Fifth Century], book 1 (Yerevan, 1983), pp. 85-87.

16. Buzand recalls Gregory the Illuminator's activity; however, he does not consider him the first preacher in Armenia, as we find in Agatangeghos's *History*; rather, he gives primacy to the apostle Thadeus.

17. Pavstos Buzand, *The Epic Histories: Buzandaran Patmutiunk*, translation and commentary by Nina G. Garsoïan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), Book 4, p. 109. See also the 1883 St. Petersburg edition

reprinted in 1984 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Nina G. Garsoïan.

18. Ibid., pp. 109-10.

19. Ibid., pp. 171-72.

20. Ibid., p. 229 (Book 5).

21. Ibid., p. 173.

22. The *Epistle* was first published in 1853 by Mkrtich Emin and was translated into Modern Armenian by Mikayel Nalbandian in 1866.

23. *History of the Armenians* was first published in Venice (1793) (Modern Armenian in 1895, Alexandropol). It was published in its entirety in French (1869) in Samuel Gantarian's (Kesarian) translation. The *History* of Parpetsi was translated into English by Robert W. Thomson (Atlanta, Ga., 1991).

24. Philology has detected that the first episode of Parpetsi's work has similarities with Movses Khorenatsi's *History* while the second, with Yeghishe's work. Different opinions have been expressed concerning this. At first it was assumed that Khorenatsi's and Yeghishe's *Histories* served as sources for Parpetsi and later, the contrary.

25. Ghazar Parpetsi, *Hayots patmutiune yev Vahan Mamikonianin gratz tughte* [History of the Armenians and the Epistle He Wrote to Vahan Mamikonian] (Alexandropol, 1895), p. 12.

26. Tamrazian, *Hai knnadatutiun* . . . , pp. 342-43.

27. See Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1968), p. 372.

28. Ghazar Parpetsi, *Hayots patmutiune* . . . , pp. 9-10.

29. Information about Yeghishe's life is taken from reports by an anonymous biographer in the anthology *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 11 (Venice, 1854), pp. 39-45.

30. See Nerses Akinian, *Yeghishe vardapet yev iur patmutiun hayots paterazmin* [Yeghishe Vardapet and His History of the Armenian War], vol. 1 (Vienna, 1932), vol. 2 (1936). Babgen Kiuleserian, *Yeghishe* (Vienna, 1909). Nikoghayos Adonts, *Armeniya v epokhu Yustinyana* [Armenia in the Age of Justinian] (St. Petersburg, 1908). Elishê, *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*, translation and commentary by Robert W. Thomson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

31. See Yeghishe, *Vardanants patmutiune* [The Vardanants History], translation, introduction, research and commentary by Yervand Ter-Minasian (Cairo, 1950). Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3, pp. 323-28. G. A. Tomasian, "Iz arkhiva Valeriya Bryusova" [From Valeri Bryusov's Archive], *Izvestiya Akademii Nauk, Obshchestvennyye nauki*, no. 5 (Yerevan, 1959). Derenik Demirchian, "Vardanants paterazme" [The Vardanants War], study, *Sovetakan Grakanutiun*, vol. 3, 1949.

32. See Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3, p. 364.

33. A group of contemporary historians (Mikayel Chamchian, Maghakia Ormanian, Hovsep Gaterchian, Garegin Zarbhanalian, Stepan Palasanian, and others) regard the Vardanants war as a religious one; while others (Set Harutiunian, Anton Garagashian, and others) consider it a rebellion of feudal *nakharars* in character.

34. Yeghishe, *Vardanants patmutiune*, translation and study by Yervand Ter-Minasian (Yerevan, 1946), p. 191. The 1957 Yerevan edition of Yeghishe's *Vasn Vardana yev hayots paterazmin* was reprinted in 1993 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Robert W. Thomson.

35. Elishê, *History of Vardan*, p. 150.

36. Ibid., p. 58.

37. Ibid., pp. 68-69.

38. Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3, p. 338.

39. Elishê, *History of Vardan*, pp. 153-54.

40. Ibid., pp. 154-55.

41. Ibid., p. 61.

42. Ibid., p. 191.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 169.

45. Ibid., pp. 170-71.

46. Ibid., pp. 246-48.

47. After the deaths of Saints Sahak and Mesrop when Surmak Yerets of the Aghbianos house, who had Syrian leanings, was elected Catholicos, the Armenian Church fell under Syrian rule. The *Targmanchats* (translators) movement was persecuted and a wave of discontent with national and Greek cultures grew. The situation changed when one of Mashtots's students, Hovsep Vayotsdzoretsi, became Catholicos. Under the new Catholicos, the Council of Shahapivan was held (443-448), which enhanced the leadership role of the clergy in politics and culture inside Armenia. After the sixth century, Syrian influence and power over the Armenian Church weakened considerably.

48. As is known, a book entitled *Hiusumn pitoyits* is also mentioned among Khorenatsi's sources, which, according to Abeghian, had poetic, folkloric content (Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3, p. 304).

In historiography, following Abeghian's work, *Hiusumn pitoyits* and *Chors hagnergutun* [Four Cantos] about the Yervandian Tigran, which Khorenatsi mentions, are thought to be one and the same work. As to the author, it is believed to be a fifth-century poet named Davit, maybe even Davit Anahagt.

Recent scholarship does not agree with this position. Grigor Grigorian in his *Hai zhoghovrdakan viperkere yev patmakan yergayin banahiusutiune* [Armenian Folk Epics and Historical Vocal Folklore], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1972), pp. 255-56, finds that *Hiusumn pitoyits* is not a piece of "folklore" but an

"historical study." Grigorian is not concerned with the book's author, whom Khorenatsi considers "the wisest of wise" but does not provide his name. Levon Mirijanian, in *Hai banasteghtzutian akunknere* [Sources of Armenian Poetry] (Yerevan, 1977), pp. 181-200, completely discounts the existence of such a source, and Hrant Tamrazian considers *Hiusumn pitoyits*, *Chors hagnergutiane* and *Davti kertutiune* different works, different sources (*Hai knnadatutiun*, book I [Yerevan, 1983], p. 433).

49. These works by Khorenatsi are included in *Movsisi Khorenatsvo matenagitutiunk* [Movses Khorenatsi's Works] (Venice, 1843).

50. For a detailed history about the controversy surrounding Khorenatsi's work see: Stepan Malkhasiants, *Khorenatsu areghtzvatzi shurje* [Regarding the Khorenatsi Enigma] (Yerevan, 1940); Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1968), pp. 276-322; Hrand K. Armen, *Patmutiun Khorenatsii knnadatutiun* [History of the Khorenatsi Criticism] (Jerusalem, 1954); Gagik Kh. Sargsian, *Hellenistakan darashrjani Hayastane yev Movses Khorenatsin* [Armenia in the Hellenistic Age and Movses Khorentsi] (Yerevan, 1966).

51. Maturin V. La Croze, *Thesaurus epistolici Lacroziani* (Leipzig, 1742-6), vol. 1, p. 358; vol. 3, p. 184.

52. Alfred Gutschmid, *Über die Glaubwürdigkeit der Armenischen Geschichte des Moses von Khoren* (Leipzig, 1876). For the Armenian translation, see *Handes Amsoria*, 1876, pp. 45-51, 110-16, 213-22, 289-302.

53. Auguste Carrière, *Nouvelles sources de Moïse de Khoren* (Vienna, 1893). For the Armenian translation, see *Handes Amsoria*, "M. Khorenatsvo mek nor aghbiure" [A New Source of Movses Khorenatsi], 1893, pp. 134-78; "Noraguin aghberk M. Khorenatsvun" [Newest Sources of Movses Khorenatsi], 1893, p. 309 ("Correspondence"); *Noraguin aghberk Movsisi Khorenatsvo yev Havelvatz* [Newest Sources of Movses Khorenatsi and Addenda], translation by Hakobos Tashian (Vienna, 1893, 1894).

54. Grigor Khalatiants, *Armyanskiy epos v istorii Armenii Moiseya Khorenskogo* [The Armenian Epic in Movses Khorenatsi's History of the Armenians] (Moscow, 1896). Khalatiants, *Armyanskie Arshakidy v istorii Armenii Moiseya Khorenskogo* [The Armenian Arshakunis and Movses Khorenatsi's History of the Armenians] (Moscow, 1903). Moses Khorenatsi, *History of the Armenians*, translation and commentary on the literary sources by Robert W. Thomson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

55. Frederick Conybeare, "Movses Khorenatsu zhamanaki masin" [Regarding Movses Khorenatsi's Time], *Handes Amsoria*, nos. 1 and 3, 1902.

56. Manuk Abeghian, *Hai zhoghovrdakan araspelnere M. Khorenatsu Hayots patmutian mej* [Armenian Folk Tales in M. Khorenatsi's History of the Armenians] (Vagharshapat, 1899).

57. The earliest published Latin translation was done by Heinrich Brenner in 1733 in Stockholm. The second Latin translation was published by

the Whiston brothers (William and George) in London in 1736. *Hayots patmutiun* was printed in French in 1841 and 1845 by Le Vaillant de Florivale in Venice and Paris. In 1869, Victor Langlois published it in French, with extensive notations, in Paris. It was printed in Italian by the Mkhitarists of Venice, under the editorship of N. Tommazzeo in 1841 and 1850, and by J. Cappelletti in 1841. Deacon H. Hovhannisian translated it into Russian, and it was printed in St. Petersburg (1809). It was also translated into Russian with exhaustive annotations by Mkrtych Emin in Moscow (1858 and 1893). The German translation by M. Lauer was published in Regensburg (1869). *Hayots patmutiun* was also translated into Hungarian, Georgian, and other languages. It was published in English by Robert W. Thomson in 1978 with an extensive introduction.

Khorenatsi's work has had several Armenian editions. It was first published in 1695 in Amsterdam. The first Modern Armenian edition was completed in 1889 by Khoren Stepane. It was published in *grabar*, with Abeghian and Set Harutiunian as editors, in Tbilisi (1913), with a comparison of several manuscripts and an extensive foreword, making it the critical edition. This edition was reprinted in 1981 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Robert W. Thomson. Also in Modern Armenian, the critical edition of *Hayots patmutiun* by Stepan Malkhasiants (Yerevan, 1953, 1968) is a noteworthy edition with introduction and commentary.

58. The enigma of Mar Abas Catina's (Maraba Mtzurnatsi) has been studied in philology for many years, in the hopes of ascertaining whether his work existed or not. Khorenatsi explains that Mar Abas has taken his *History* from a work translated by Alexander the Maceonian's order from Chaldean to Greek, and was found in the archives of Nineveh. The Assyrian Mar Abas attempted to extract the sections relating to Armenians from the aforementioned piece, upon advice of the first Armenian king, Vagharshak. As such, Mar Abas's source has for centuries been considered as a reliable source regarding the past history of Armenians. In 1876, a French scholar, A. Cadernere, made it clear that in Alexander the Great's era the city of Nineveh had long been destroyed. Further, it was considered inconsistent that accounts of Armenian prowess—where Armenians are portrayed as brave and virtuous individuals—would be lauded rather than deeds of the Babylonian (Bel) and Assyrian (Shamiram) characters in an Assyrian document. Several philological studies have pursued this line of argumentation (Emin, Garagashian, Malkhasiants, Langlois, and others). The most recent studies, however, have drawn the conclusion that the Mar Abas source existed in the second century B.C., from which Khorenatsi has borrowed stories of the Armenian past (see Hakob Manandian, "Nachal'naya istoriya Armenii Mar Abasa" [Mar Abas's Early History of Armenia], *Palestinskiy sbornik*, vol. 2 (63-64), [Moscow-Leningrad, 1956], pp. 69-86).

59. Moses Khorenatsi, *History of the Armenians*, translation and commentary on the literary sources by Robert W. Thomson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 70.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 126-27.

61. Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia: From the Earliest Times until Firdawsi* (London, 1902), p. 117.

62. For Khorenatsi's folkloric narratives, see chapter 4 of the present volume.

63. In writing about the genealogy of the Armenian people, he has primarily made use of the the Bible and *Chronicle* of Eusebius.

64. Moses Khorenatsi, *History of the Armenians*, pp. 69-70.

65. It was only in the eighteenth century that the exhaustive work *Patmutiun hayots i skzbane ashkhari minchev tsam tiarn 1784* [History of the Armenians From the Beginning of the World to the Year of Our Lord 1784] was written by the Mkhitarist father Mikayel Chamchian (vols. 1-3, 1784-1786), which became the first attempt to present a critical history of Armenia and the Armenian people, and its author—the father of modern Armenian history. After Chamchian, Anton Garagashian, Stepan Palasanian, and Leo have attempted to write comprehensive and systematic historiography.

66. Hrant Tamrazian, *Hai knnadatutiun*, p. 282.

67. Moses Khorenatsi, *History of the Armenians*, pp. 65-66.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 332; p. 348.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 339-40.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 343-44.

71. *Ibid.*, pp. 350-53.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 296.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

75. *Ibid.*, pp. 324-25.

76. Varag D. Arakelian, "Khorenatsu lezun yev voche" [Khorenatsi's Syntax and Style], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2 (Yerevan, 1975), p. 107.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Nikoghayos Adonts, *Armenia in the Age of Justinian*, transl. Nina G. Garsoïan (Lisbon, 1970), p. 163.

2. See Nikoghayos Ya. Mar, *Fiziolog* [Bestiary] (St. Petersburg, 1908), p. 208.

3. The first publisher of Sebeos's *History*, under the title *Patmutiun Sebeosi yepiskoposi i Herakln*, was Tadeos M. Ter-Astvatzatrian Mihrdatiants

(Constantinople, 1851). Stepan Malkhasiants's publication, *Sebeosi yepiskoposi patmutiun* (Yerevan, 1939), is considered to be a critical text with a foreword and notes. The latest publication of Sebeos's *History* was solicitously realized by Georg V. Abgarian (*Patmutiun Sebeosi* [Yerevan, 1979]).

4. The oldest manuscript of the work ascribed to Sebeos, copied in 1672, has reached us without the name of the author or title (now in the national archive, Matenadaran, ms. 2639). Another copy of this work, copied in 1568, was discovered in Ejmiatzin by Hovhannes Shahkhatunian in 1831. Shahkhatunian gave it the title *Patmagirk Sebeosi i Herakln*, explaining that several ancient Armenian writers accepted a similar work as Sebeos's (Stepannos Taronetsi [Asoghik], tenth century; Kirakos Gandzaketsi, thirteenth century; Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, thirteenth century). Tenth-century historians Ukhtanes, Tovma Artzruni, and Catholicos Hovhannes, and in the thirteenth century Vardan Areveltsi, Simeon Aparanetsi, and Vardan Baghishetsi have quoted this work without mentioning Sebeos's name. Later this manuscript copy was lost. Vardan Baghishetsi, who was commissioner of the manuscript in 1672, recorded the above mentioned work under the title *Patmutiun Khosrovu* [History of Khosrov] in his list drawn up in 1689-1704 of manuscripts found in Amrdolu Monastery.

5. On this issue see Abgarian, *Patmutiun Sebeosi*, pp. 371-85. This position is rejected by Poghos Ananian, *Sebeosi Patmutian grki masin kani me lusabanutiunner* [A Few Clarifications About Sebeos's *History*] (Venice, 1972) and Khosrov Torosian, "Sebeos patmiche yev nra yerke" [The Historian Sebeos and His Opus], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 9, 1969, pp. 59-100.

6. *Patmutiun Sebeosi*, p. 373.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 374.

8. This puzzle has been examined by Abgarian (*Ibid.*, pp. 386-90) and Malkhasiants (*Sebeosi yepiskoposi patmutiun*, pp. 5-81).

9. *Patmutiun Sebeosi*, p. 86.

10. G. Yu. Aliev, "Rannyye Khristianskiye istochniki legendy o Khosrove i Shirin" [Various Christian Sources of the Legend of Khosrov and Shirin], *Sovetskoye Vostokovedeniye*, no. 6, 1957, p. 87.

11. Movses Kaghankatvatsi's *History of the Land of the Albanians* was published for the first time (Paris, 1860) by Karapet Shahnazariants. It was translated into Russian, French, English, Georgian, Turkish, and other languages. In 1969 it was translated into Modern Armenian in Yerevan. The English translation is by Charles J. F. Dowsett (*The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movses Dasxuranci*, London Oriental Series, vol. 8, [London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1961]).

12. See Asatur Sh. Mnatsakanian, *Aghvanits ashkharhi grakanutian hartseri shurje* [On Issues Regarding Literature on Albania] (Yerevan, 1966).

Kaghankatvatsi's work is primarily the history of the Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik. After the partition in 387 of the kingdom of Armenia Major, Iran affixed these provinces to the margravate of Albania. Their dense Armenian population subjugated the Albanian tribes and principalities and became the dominant element. Armenian schools operated in Albania, and Armenian was the official language of the country, while the Albanian Church was a branch of the Armenian.

13. Certain philologists (Manandian, Akinian, Arakelian) recognize Movses Kaghankatvatsi as author of all three books of *History of the Land of the Albanians*. Contradictory opinions have also been expressed concerning the period of Kaghankatvatsi's life. It has been placed in the seventh (Sukias Somalian, Emin, Zarbhanalian, Leo, Mnatsakanian, et al.), eighth (E. Boret), and tenth (Marie Brosset, Acharian, Manandian, Abeghian, Akinian, et al.) centuries. See Movses Kaghankatvatsi, *Patmutiun Aghvanits ashkharhi*, introduction and critical text by Varag Arakelian (Yerevan, 1983), pp. 5-15.

14. Ibid., p. 23.

15. Ibid., p. 21.

16. It has been suggested that Davtak Kertogh's "Elegy" has been translated from Albanian to Armenian. However, the fact that it is written with acrostics refutes this. Since it is conjoined by thirty-six letters of the Armenian alphabet, it has thirty-six verses, which would have been impossible to translate if it had been originally written by acrostics formed in the fifty-two letters of Albanian; it would have meant that the poem should have fifty-two verses instead of thirty-six (see Mnatsakanian, *Aghvanits ashkharhi grakanutian hartseri shurje*, pp. 165-67).

The "Elegy" was first printed in 1860 by Mser Mserian in *Chrakagh* [Anthology of Sermons], folio V, pp. 79-83, as well as in Kaghankatvatsi's *Patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians], vol. I [Paris, 1860], pp. 354-59.

17. Movses Kaghankatvatsi, *Patmutiun Aghvanits ashkharhi*, pp. 225-26.

18. Ibid., pp. 227-28.

19. *History of Taron* was first published in Constantinople, 1719.

20. It is conjectured that Glak wrote his *History* in Syriac or Greek on Gregory the Illuminator's recommendation. Hovhan Mamikonian translated it in the seventh century into Armenian and attached it to his work. As a consequence of this, in philology, Glak is considered a historian of the seventh century rather than of the fourth.

Certain researchers also consider Hovhan Mamikonian author of the two parts of *Patmutiun Taron* and place him not in the seventh but in the eighth century (see Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 3 [Yerevan, 1968], p. 448.)

21. At the present, fourteen hand-penned manuscripts of Ghevond's *History* exist in the libraries of Yerevan, Paris, and Venice. It was published for the first time by Karapet Shahnazariants (Paris, 1857) (*Arshavank arabats i hais, ararial Ghevond Vardapeti hayots, i luis entzayiats K. V. Shahnazariants* [The Arab Invasion of Armenia, Written by Ghevond Vardapet the Armenian, Published by K. V. Shahnazariants]). Ghevond's *History* has been translated into foreign languages. The Modern Armenian translation was done by Aram Ter-Ghevondian (Yerevan, 1982).

22. Ghevond, *Patmutiun* [History], translation, introduction, and commentary by Aram Ter Ghevondian (Yerevan, 1982), p. 119.

23. Nerses Akinian, *Ghevond Yerets patmagir* [Ghevond Yerets the Historian], vol. 3 of *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner* [Literary Studies] (Vienna, 1930), p. 706.

24. *Philostratus and Eunapius* (Cambridge, 1961). M. G. Melkonian, "Hin ashkharhi hrchakavor hretor Proyeresios—Paruir Haikazne" [The Famous Orator of the Ancient World: Prohaeresius—Paruir Haikazn] (*Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1984, pp. 163-170).

25. *Refutation of Sects* was printed for the first time under the title *Girk enddimutians* [Book of Disputations] (Smyrna, 1763). In the nineteenth century, Yeznik's book was published in Venice (1826, 1850), Paris (1860), Tiflis (1914), and elsewhere. It has had numerous translations.

26. Yeznik Koghbatsi, *Yeghtz aghandots*, translated by A. A. Abrahamian (Yerevan, 1970), pp. 35-36.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. See Manuk Abeghian, "Endhanur tesutiun hayots hin banasteghtzutian" [General Survey of Ancient Armenian Poetry], *Yerker* [Works], vol. 7 (Yerevan, 1975), pp. 321-22.

2. Already in the tenth century Khosrov Andzevatsi had dealt with the interpretation and study of this poetic genre in his work *Meknutiun zhamakargutian* [Commentary on the Mass]; while later Nerses Shnorhali and Nerses Lambronatsi and other medieval writers did so. In recent times the following works are considered valuable: Gabriel Avetikian's *Batsatrutiun sharakanats* [Explanation of *Sharakans*] (Venice, 1814); Ghevond Alishan's *Shnorhali yev paraga iur* [Shnorhali and His Times] (Venice, 1873); Mkrtich Emin's *Sharakan, bogosluzhebnie kanony i pesni armianskoy vostochnoy tserkvi* [*Sharakans, Liturgical Canons, and Songs of the Armenian Eastern Church*] (Moscow, 1879); Sahak Amatuni, *Hin yev nor parakanon kam anvaver sharakanner* [Old and New Apocryphal or Non-valid *Sharakans*]

(Vagharshapat, 1911); the articles of Abeghian, printed in issues no. 7-12 for 1912 of *Ararat* and Grigor Hakobian's *Sharakanneri zhanre hai mijnadarian grakanutian mej (V-XV dd.)* [The Genre of *Sharakans* in Armenian Medieval Literature (Fifth-Fifteenth Centuries)] (Yerevan, 1980).

3. The *Pataragamatuits* is a summary of rituals of the mass, containing prayers, spiritual songs, sermons, and biblical quotations. Basil of Caesarea is considered the first compiler/editor of the *Pataragamatuits*. Subsequently, it had numerous editions and variants.

Armenians fundamentally utilized Basil of Caesarea's *Pataragamatuits*, which was translated in the fifth century in an abbreviated version. After the ninth century its complete translation was made, as were translations of other books for the mass. The Armenian *Pataragamatuits*, which received its final text in the seventeenth century, has deep philological and linguistic significance for the study of Christian literature. It was published for the first time by Hakob Meghapart (Venice, 1513); the Mkhitarists compiled the critical text of the missal; see Hovsep Gaterchian, *Srbazan pataragamatutsk Hayots ...* [Armenian Holy Missals ...] (Vienna, 1897).

4. See Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *Patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians] (Yerevan, 1961), p. 61.

5. The oldest surviving manuscript of *Sharaknots* dates from the twelfth to thirteenth centuries and has been published many times.

6. The apocryphal *sharakans*, 270 in number, were published for the first time by Sahak Amatuni in his *Hin yev nor parakanon kam anvaver sharakanner* (Vagharshapat, 1911).

7. See Hakobian, *Sharakanneri zhanre ...*, p. 332.

8. *Sharakan* (Constantinople, 1853), pp. 137-138.

9. *Sharakan hogevor yergots* [*Sharakan* of Spiritual Songs] (Jerusalem, 1936), p. 258.

10. *Sharakan*, p. 133.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

12. For an explanation of the metrication rules, see chapter 15 of the present volume.

13. *Dzainkagh sharakan* [Harmonized *Sharakan*] (Ejmiatzin, 1833), p. 188.

14. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 38.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

18. Komitas was elected Catholicos in 615; the same year he participated in the "Persian Council" at Tizbon where the *Havato gir* [Codex of Faith] was presented, condemning the Council of Chalcedon. He is also known for his building and cultural activities. He constructed St. Hripsime's temple in

618, rebuilt the cathedral at St. Ejmiatzin, completed the building of the church of St. Gregory in Dvin, and was a patron of the patriarchates of Dvin, Siunik, Arsharunik, the monastery at Ejmiatzin, and the schools of Mairavan and Shirak (see Maghakia Ormanian, *Azgapatum* [National History], Part 1 (Constantinople, 1912).

19. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 577.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 616.

21. Grigor Narekatsi's verses are analyzed in chapter 9 of the present volume.

22. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 908.

23. *Sion*, no. 3-4, 1941, p. 74.

24. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 769.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 737.

26. According to studies by Nikoghos Tahmizian, close to 200 spiritual songs in the *Sharaknots* were authored by Shnorhali. He arrived at this conclusion from the lists of *sharakans* mentioned by medieval historians Nerses Lambronatsi and Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the *vita* of Nerses Shnorhali, and based on the study of sources by philologists Alishan, Avetikian, and Amatuni (see Nikoghos Tahmizian, *Nerses Shnorhalin yergahan yev yerazhisht* [Nerses Shnorhali: Composer and Musician] (Yerevan, 1973), p. 34.

27. Ghevond Alishan, *Shnorhali yev paraga iur* (Venice, 1873), p. 443.

28. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 470.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 471.

30. Nikoghos Tahmizian, "Knnakan tesutium hayots hin yev mijnadarian yerazhshtutian patmutian" [Critical Survey of the History of Ancient and Medieval Armenian Music], *Lraber Hasarakakan Gitutiunneri*, no. 5, 1971, p. 41.

31. *Hayots hin yev mijnatarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia* [Chrestomathy of Ancient and Medieval Armenian Poetry] (Yerevan, 1979), p. 86.

32. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 755.

33. The worship of light is connected with the earliest periods of Eastern civilization (Zoroastrian, Assyro-Babylonian, etc.). Aspiring to the light and warmth of fire, songs of faith with motifs of light-worship were written, especially following the Mazdean spiritual hymns called Zend-Avesta that glorified the gods of the Avestan pantheon, wherein Mithra was considered god of light and sun.

Fire, light, sun, and the East were objects of worship in pagan centuries. They were opposed by evil and darkness. Many elements of the glorification of light are present in the Old Testament, too, dating from a period preceding Christianity. The multi-faceted idea of light was concentrated by

Christian doctrine on the sole God of warmth, brightness, goodness, innocence, and justice ("Light, Creator of light"), Christ, the Holy Spirit, Mary, etc.

The worship of light followed this same transition not only in Armenian but also in international Christian literature.

34. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 790.

35. Nikoghos Tahmizian, "Arevelian kristoneakan yergarveste yev Nerses Shnorhalin" [Eastern Christian Musicology and Nerses Shnorhali], *Nerses Shnorhali, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu* [Nerses Shnorhali: Collected Essays] (Yerevan, 1977), pp. 112-113.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

37. Vardapet Karekin Sarkissian, *A Brief Introduction to Armenian Christian Literature* (London, 1960) pp. 44-45. Shnorhali is further discussed in chapter 10 of the present volume.

38. Lambronatsi is so-called after his patrimonial fortress of Lambron which belonged to his grandfather, Prince Oshin. Nerses received his episcopal calling in 1175 and worked in various places—Tarsus, Lambron, the retreat at Skevra, on Black (Sev) Mountain, and elsewhere. He wrote about numerous topics, including *Pataragi meknutiun* [Interpretation of the Service], interpretations of Cyril of Jerusalem's *Parapmants girk* [Book of Vocations], *Book of Proverbs*, of the *Psalms*, interpretations of the twelve prophets, oratory, homilies, translations, manuscripts, etc.

39. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 394.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 375.

41. On Hovhannes Yerznkatsi, see chapter 15 of the present volume.

42. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 264.

43. *Sharakan* (Jerusalem, 1936), p. 693.

44. Kirakos Yerznkatsi was born in the district of Yekeghiats and so is called Yerznkatsi. He is regarded as a representative of the philosophical school of Yerznka in the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries and left a multi-faceted literary legacy including sermons, homilies, interpretations, *sharakans*, *kh rats* (advice), etc. He was a pedagogue and put together volumes embracing philosophical homilies, interpretations, and other materials of a scholarly nature (see *Srbo Horn Yevagri Pontatsvo vark yev matenagrutiunk* [The Life and Writings of the Holy Father Evagrius of Pontus], ed. Barsegh Sargisian (Venice, 1907).

45. *Sharakan hogevor yergots*, p. 995.

46. The Greeks adopted use of the *khaz* system from the Indians. Subsequently, it spread throughout the world with the name *nota*.

Armenians have inherited from the past 2,000 books written in *khaz* notation, which to the present have not been deciphered.

47. The noted twentieth-century Armenian composer and vocalist, Komitas, has written about the mutual influence of Armenian spiritual music

and popular-secular songs on each other (see Soghomon Soghomonian, "Hayots yekeghetsu yeghanaknere" [Tunes of the Armenian Church], *Ararat*, 1894). Also on Armenian spiritual music see Spiridon Melikian, *Hunakan azdetsutiune hai yerazhshtutian tesakani vra* [Greek Influence on Types of Armenian Music] (Tiflis, 1914); Kh. Teteyian, *Entatsk hay yekeghetsakan yerazhshtutian* [Course on Armenian Church Music], vols. 1 and 2 (Venice, 1958); Robert Atayian, *Haykakan khazayin notagrutiun* [Armenian Khaz Notations] (Yerevan, 1959); Egon Velesh, *The New Oxford History of Music*, vol. 2 (London, 1961), etc.

Notes to Chapter 8

1. The works of Hippocrates, Asclepiades, Oribazis, Gregory of Nyssa, Galens, Nemesius of Emesa, and other works on medicine and natural philosophy were translated earlier, which greatly assisted the development of Armenian medicine.

2. Yervand Ter-Minasian, *Mijnadarian aghandneri tzagman yev zargatsman patmutiunits* [History of the Origin and Development of Medieval Heresies] (Yerevan, 1968).

3. *Patmutiun Aristakia vardapeti Lastiverttsvo vash antsiitsn antselots i hailasern azgats, vork shurj zmeok yen* [History of Aristakes Vardapet Lastiverttsi of Goings On in the Foreign Nations Surrounding Us] (Tiflis, 1912), p. 51.

4. Grigor Magistros's *Tghter* [Epistles] was published by Karapet Kostanians (Alexandropol, 1910).

5. *Ibid.*, #45.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Nerses Shnorhali, *Vipasanutiun* [Epic] (Venice, 1820), p. 410.

8. *Patmutiun Shapuh Bagratunvo* [History by Shapuh Bagratuni], which was published under the name of Shapuh Bagratuni in 1921, was not authored by him. Later the authorship was attributed to the conditionally named Ananun Zrutsagir ("Anonymous Chronicler"). See Tateos Avdalbegian, *Hayagitakan hetazotutiunner* [Armenological Studies] (Yerevan, 1969).

9. First published as *Patmutiun Hovhannu Katoghikosi amenain hayots* [History by Hovhannes Catholicos of All Armenians] (Jerusalem, 1843).

10. Leo, *Hayots patmutiun* [History of the Armenians], vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1947), p. 588.

11. *Hovhannes Katoghikosi Draskhanakerttsvo patmutiun hayots* [History of the Armenians by Catholicos Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi] (Tiflis, 1912), p. 246. This edition has been reprinted (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books,

1979) with an introduction by Krikor H. Maksoudian. The latter has also translated the *History* (Atlanta, Ga., 1987).

12. The *History* was first published in Constantinople (1852). It has been translated into French by Marie Brosset (1874) and into English by Robert W. Thomson (1985).

13. Norair Biuzandatsi, "Tovma Artzruni yev Ananun Artzruni yerku ailevail patmagirk yen" [Tovma Artzruni and Anonymous Artzruni Are Two Different Historians], *Bazmavep*, 1905, nos. 5-10. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1968), pp. 498-505.

14. Tovma Artzruni, *Patmutiun tann Artzruniats* (Tiflis, 1917), p. 493. (Anonymous Artzruni's *History* is published together with Tovma Artzruni's work, as its immediate continuation.) The 1887 St. Petersburg edition of *Patmutiun tann Artzruniats* has been reprinted (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books, 1991) with an introduction by Robert W. Thomson.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 476-77.

16. Aristakes Lastiverttsi's *History* was first published by the Venetian Mkhitarists in 1844 under the title *Patmutiun Aristakia vardapeti Lastiverttsvo* [History by Aristakes Vardapet Lastiverttsi]. Edouard Dulaurier translated various portions into French in 1859, and in 1864 nearly the entire book was translated into French by Evariste Prud'homme in Paris (*Histoire d'Arménie, comprenant la fin du royaume d'Ani et le commencement de l'invasion des Seldjoukides*).

Chapters twenty-two and twenty-three were translated into English by Frederick Conybeare, *The Key of Truth: A Manual of the Paulician Church of Armenia* (Oxford, 1898), p. 131-40.

It was also translated into Russian, *Povestvovanie vardapeta Aristakesa Lastiverttsi* [Story by Vardapet Aristakes Lastiverttsi] (Moscow, 1968).

The Modern Armenian translation was published in 1893, *Aristakes Lastiverttsi vardapeti hayots patmutiune* [History of the Armenians by Aristakes Vardapet Lastiverttsi], by Minas Ter-Petrosiants (Alexandropol).

17. *Patmutiun Aristakia vardapeti* (Tiflis, 1912), p. 51.

18. Gurgen M. Manukian, *Aristakes Lastivertsi, matenagrutian banasirakan knnutiun* [Aristakes Lastivertsi: Philological Study of His Works] (Yerevan, 1977), p. 39. Nina Garsoïan, *The Paulician Heresy* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1967). George Huxley, "The Historical Geography of the Paulician and Tondrakian Heresies," in Thomas Samuelian and Michael Stone, eds., *Medieval Armenian Culture* (University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies, 6, Chico, Calif., 1983), pp. 81-95.

19. *Patmutiun Aristakia ...*, p. 51.

20. Gurgen M. Manukian, *Aristakes Lastivertsi*, p. 90.

21. *Ibid.* p. 75.

22. *Ibid.* p. 70.

23. Ibid. p. 86.

24. Ibid. p. 111.

25. The *Zhamanakagrutiun* [Chronicle] of Matteos Urhayetsi was first published (Jerusalem, 1869) under the title *Patmutiun* [History]. The complete work was published in Vagharshapat (1898). Edouard Dulaurier translated it into French in 1858. The *Chronicle* was also published in Turkish in 1962. It appeared in Modern Armenian in the 1973 translation by Hrach Bartikian in Yerevan.

26. Matteos Urhayetsi, *Zhamanakagrutiun* (Yerevan, 1973), p. 31.

27. Edouard Dulaurier, ed., *Recueil des historiens des Croisades. Documents arméniens*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1869).

28. Félix Nève, *Les chefs belges de la Première Croisade d'après les historiens arméniens* (Bruxelles, 1859).

29. Heinrich Petermann, *Beiträge zu der Geshiechte der Kreuzzüge aus armenischen Quellen*. Abhandlungen der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin (Berlin, 1860).

30. René Grousset, *Histoire des Croisades et du royaume franc de Jérusalem*, vols. 1-3 (Paris, 1934-36).

31. Jean Laurent, "Des Grecs aux Croisés. Etude sur l'histoire d'Edesse entre 1081 et 1098," *Byzantion*, t. 1 (1924), pp. 367-449.

32. Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vols. 1-3 (Cambridge, 1951-55).

33. Aneliese Lüders, *Die Kreuzzüge im Urteil syrischer und armenischer Quellen* (Berlin, 1964).

34. *Patmutiun hunats i Kostandnupolis ...* [History of the Greeks in Constantinople ...] was first published in Moscow (1856). It was translated into French by Victor Langlois and published in Paris (1869).

35. Kirakos Gandzaketsi's *Patmutiun hayots* has forty-seven rescensions. It was published for the first time in Moscow (1858). Karapet Melik-Ohanjanian's study published in Yerevan (1961) is considered the critical edition. The book has been translated into French (1870) and Russian (1976).

36. It was first published by Mkrtich Emin (1861). In the same year he published it also in Russian. Sections have been published in French (Edouard Dulaurier's translation in 1860, Joseph Muyltermans's in 1927) and Turkish (H. Andriasian's translation in 1937). The academic critical text was prepared by Pailak Antabian, *Vardan Areveltsi: kiankn u gortzuneutiune* [Vardan Areveltsi: His Life and Work], Book 1 (Yerevan, 1987); Book 2, 1989. The English translation was accomplished by Robert W. Thomson, "The Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewelc'i," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, no. 43, 1989, pp. 125-226. The original text was reprinted in 1991 (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books) with an introduction by Robert W. Thomson.

37. See chapter 7 of the present volume.

38. Ashot G. Abrahamian, *Hovhannes Imastaseri matenagrutiune* [Hovhannes Imastaser's Works] (Yerevan, 1956).

39. It was preserved in a hand-written prayerbook of the Marsuan manuscript collection and was published by Ghevond Alishan in *Bazmavep* (1847), pp. 221-225.

40. Ibid., p. 221.

Notes to Chapter 9

1. It must be noted that medieval Armenian authors spoke more about Homer, the man, and his art than they actually came under his influence. Grigor Magistros, Hovhannes Imastaser, Nerses Shnorhali, Khachatur Kecharetsi, and others were interested and to an extent influenced by him, but the influence did not extend beyond imitation of various external characteristics of the great Classical Greek works (see R. Grigorian, "Huna-haikakan grakan kaperi patmutiunits" [History of Greco-Armenian Literary Ties], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 3 (Yerevan, 1963).

2. It is worth noting that in the tenth through thirteenth centuries, literature and art were experiencing their golden ages in the lands neighboring Armenia—Persia and Arabia. Poetry, especially, in these Eastern countries during that period, produced such geniuses as Firdawsi (934/941-1020) in Persia, al-Mutanabbi (915-965) and Abu-al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri (973-1057) in Arab lands.

3. Grigor Narekatsi's hagiography is contained in various editions of the manuscripts of *Matian voghbergutian* (Book of Lamentations) as well as the *Haismavurks* of Grigor Anavarzetsi and Grigor Khlatetsi, where especially the widespread popular traditions about Narekatsi are recounted (see Grigor Narekatsi, *Matian voghbergutian*, ed. Poghos Khachatrian and Arshaluis Ghazinian [Yerevan, 1985], p. 169)

4. *Girk vor kochi Aismavurk* [A Book Called *Aismavurk*] (Constaninople, 1730), p. 394.

5. See Haik Gasparian, "Grigor Narekatsin fransiakan grakan mtki gnahatmamb" [Grigor Narekatsi In the Appraisal of French Literary Thought], *Sovetakan Grakanutium*, no. 6, 1966, p. 146.

6. Narekatsi's odes are quoted from *Srbuin horn mero Grigori Nareka vanits vanakani matenagrutiunk* [Literary Works of Our Holy Father Grigor the Hermit of the Monastery of Narek] (Venice, 1840). The numbers in brackets at the end of each excerpt indicate page numbers in the quoted work.

7. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1968), p. 624.

8. Varag Arakelian, *Grigor Narekatsu lezun yev voche* [The Syntax and Style of Grigor Narekatsi] (Yerevan, 1975), p. 272.

9. The first printing of *Book of Lamentations* was attempted by Voskan Yerevantsi in Marseille (1673) which, on account of the publisher's death, remained incomplete. It was first published in complete form by the Patriarch of Jerusalem Minas Amdetsi in Constantinople (1700-1702).

The most important publications of *Narek* are the 1774 printing in Constantinople as well as the 1840 edition in Venice (*Srbuin horn mero Grigori Nareka vanits vanakani matenagrutiunk*). As a work of textual criticism, Gabriel Avetikian's *Nareklutz* is considered unsurpassed (1801, 1827 and 1859) in which the editor, on the basis of earlier publications (in particular the 1774 Constantinople edition of *Narek*), reviews nearly all the problems and enigmas associated with the text, facilitating the work of all later translators and publishers. A critical edition of *Book of Lamentations*, based on comparison of sixty-one manuscripts, was produced by Poghos Khachatrian and Arshaluis Ghazinian at the Institute of Literature, Armenian Academy of Sciences (Grigor Narekatsi, *Matian voghbergutian* [Yerevan, 1985]).

Narek has been rendered into the Armenian vernacular by Misak Gochunian (*Ashkharhabar Narek* [Constantinople, 1902]); Bishop Torgom Gushakian (*Narek, aghotamatian S. Grigori Narekatsvo*, which had five editions in different cities); and Bishop Garegin Khachaturian (*Narek, voghbergutiun S. Grigor Narekatsii* [Constantinople, 1926]). These were rendered in Western Armenian prose, which were followed by verse publications: Bishop Garegin Khachaturian (Trabizoni), *Narek: Matian voghbergutian S. Grigor Narekatsii* (Buenos Aires, 1948); Mkrtich Kheranian, *Grigor Narekatsi, Matian voghbergutian* (Yerevan, 1960); Vazgen Georgian, *Grigor Narekatsi, Matian voghbergutian, Tagher* (Yerevan, 1970). The 1948 Buenos Aires edition has been reprinted (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books, 1981) with an introduction by James R. Russell.

10. The excerpts from *Book of Lamentations* are from *Matian voghbergutian*, ed. Poghos Khachatrian and Arshaluis A. Ghazinian (Yerevan, 1985). The translations, where available, are from Grigor Narekatsi, *Lamentations of Narek*, translated by Mischa Kudian (London, 1977), which contains the first twenty-five elegies of Narekatsi's work; otherwise, they are done expressly for the present volume.

11. Luc-André Marcel, *Grégoire de Narek et l'ancienne poésie arménienne* (Paris, 1953), p. 31.

12. Ibid., p. 36.

13. Mkrtich Mkrian, *Grigor Narekatsi* (Yerevan, 1955), p. 213.

14. Yeghivard, *Nareke hai grakanutian mej* [*Narek* in Armenian Literature] (Jerusalem, 1947), p. 66.

15. Varag Arakelian, *Grigor Narekatsu lezun yev voche*, p. 60.

16. Ibid., p. 40.

Notes to Chapter 10

1. Ghevond Alishan wrote the first serious and extensive study on Shnorhali, *Shnorhali yev paraga iur* [Shnorhali and His Times], published in Venice (1873). In it he presents the poet's life, his ecclesiastic and religious activity, concisely analyzing his literary works. Also valuable is Manuk Abeghian's study, which forms part of his *Hayots hin grakanutian patmutiun* [History of Ancient Armenian Literature], vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1946), where he evaluates Shnorhali's religious activity and creative work. There is also Grigor Hakobian's noteworthy monograph *Nerses Shnorhali* (Yerevan, 1964) and the collection marking the 800th anniversary of the poet's death (*Nerses Shnorhali, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu* [Nerses Shnorhali: Collected Essays], Yerevan, 1977).

Nerses Shnorhali's life, riddles, hymns, epics, and various issues relating to his art have been studied at various times by numerous Armenian and other scholars. His dogmatic letters, spiritual poetry, riddles, and historical epics were translated into various European languages in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

2. Ghevond Alishan, *Shnorhali yev paraga iur*, p. 491.

3. Félix Nève, *L'Arménie Chrétienne et sa Littérature* (Louvain, 1886), p. 273.

4. Nerses Shnorhali, *Bank chapav* [Metrical Dicta] (Venice, 1830), p. 58.

5. Ibid., p. 101

6. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 4 (Yerevan, 1970), pp. 124-25.

7. In 1830 this poem was published by the Lazarian Academy (Moscow) in 12 languages, and in 1882 it was translated into 36 languages by the Mkhitarist Brotherhood, *Preces Sancti Nersetis Clajensis Armeniorum Patriarchae triginta sex linguis editae* (Venice).

8. On Shnorhali's *sharakans*, see chapter 7 of the present volume.

9. Nerses Shnorhali, *Bank chapav*, p. 474-75.

10. Ibid., p. 344.

11. Ibid., pp. 329-30.

12. Ibid., p. 333.

13. Ibid., p. 570.

14. Ibid., p. 563.

15. Ibid., p. 617.

16. *Nerses Shnorhali, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu*, p. 46.

17. *Voghb Yedesio* was copied many times by scribes in the Middle Ages. The oldest copy which has reached us was made in 1284, in the city of

Adana, Cilicia, and is now in the Matenadaran of Yerevan. *Lament* was first printed in 1810 (Madras) by Sargis Aghavaliants.

18. Nerses Shnorhali, *Haghags yerkni yev zarduts nora, Hanelukner, Voghb Yedesio* [On Heaven and its Adornments, Riddles, Lament for Edessa] (Yerevan, 1968), p. 56.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 50-51.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

21. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 4 (Yerevan, 1970), p. 131.

22. Nerses Shnorhali, *Haghags yerkni yev ...*, p. 91.

23. The first half of the poem was translated into French by Edouard Dulaurier in his *Recueil des historien des croisades. Documents arméniens ...* with the title "Elégie sur la prise d'Edesse" [vol. 1 (Paris, 1869), p. 226-68]. A portion was translated into Russian by Valeri Bryusov under the title "Elegiya na vzyatie Edessy" [Elegy on the Taking of Edessa], *Poeziya Armenii ...* [Armenian Poetry ...] (Moscow, 1916), pp. 171-78.

24. Ghevond Alishan, *Nshmark haikakank* [Remarks on Armenian Topics] (Venice, 1870), p. 28.

25. See Nerses Shnorhali, *hotvatzneri zhoghovatzu*, pp. 176-188.

26. See Shushanik L. Nazarian, "Nerses Shnorhali kerpere mijnadarian gegharvestakan grakanutian mej" [Nerses Shnorhali's Figure in Medieval Literature], *Nerses Shnorhali, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu*, pp. 67-83. Aram D. Ghanalanian, "Nerses Shnorhali zhoghovrdakan avandutiunnerum" [Nerses Shnorhali in Popular Traditional Tales], *ibid.*, pp. 83-85.

Notes to Chapter 11

1. The heroes of the epic often have satirical names, the most common of which is *tzur*, which is assigned to the heroes of Sasun as a hereditary characteristic. This is sometimes replaced by the synonyms *gizh*, *khent*, and *dal* and embodies the satirical traits of the heroes of Sasun and their acts. By calling them *tzur* the people underline the unbridled strength of those braves, their recklessness, naiveté, frequent insouciance, and audacity. The word *tzur* is used in a more positive than negative sense and in essence has a metaphorical significance.

2. The episodes and language of the epic's variants are brought together in this text. The compilers (Manuk Abeghian, Georg Abov, and Aram Ghanalanian) have preserved the metrical uniformity and structure of the sentences by making partial changes and have brought it closer to the pronunciation of the Araratian dialect.

3. On the Indo-European similarities of the four generations of the epic, see Stepan Ahian's article, "*Sasna tzerer* haikakan epose yev hndyevropakan

yerek funksianere" [The Armenian Epic *Sasna Tzrer* and the Three Indo-European Functions], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1985, pp. 32-46.

4. The link uniting the Sanasar cycle to David's, according to Abeghian's research, is *Taruni Vepe* [The Epic of Tarun], which he finds in the Arab historian el-Vakidi's *History of the Conquest of Mesopotamia and Armenia*. It is a traditional story about Tarun (daughter of Zarvand, prince of Khlat and Salmast) and Mush (son of Sanasar, prince of Sasun), which passed from Armenians to the Arabs and was adapted to the Arab environment and historical events. See *Azgagrakan Handes*, book 15 (1906).

5. *Sasuntsi Davit, haikakan zhoghovrdakan epos* [David of Sasun: Armenian National Epic] (Yerevan, 1939), p. 268.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 282.

8. According to Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, the fictional David, by popular tradition, is related to King David of the Old Testament, because it is he who as a youth killed Goliath and saved the land. See Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, *L'épopée populaire Arménienne David de Sassoun: Étude critique* (Montréal, 1972).

9. *Azgagrakan Handes*, book 16 (1907), p. 101.

10. Nearly all the superhuman miracles of Sasun's heroes are performed through the God of Marut. It is conjectured that the name *Marut* is borrowed from the names of the warriors accompanying the Indian god Indra. They are called *Maruts* and sometimes take Indra's place, appearing with a single face. See Georges Dumézil, *Dieux souverains des I.E.* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), no. 1, pp. 217, 221-22, 230.

11. *Azgagrakan Handes*, book 17 (1908), p. 29.

12. *Sasuntsi Davit*, p. 263.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 297.

14. The English rendition of the epic was accomplished by Leon Surmelian (*Daredevils of Sassoun* [London, 1966]). Another is by Mischa Kudian (*The Saga of Sassoun* [London, 1970]). In French, see Frédéric Feydit, *David de Sassoun* (Paris, 1964).

Notes to Chapter 12

1. See Armenuhi Srapian, *Hai mijnadarian zruitsner* [Armenian Medieval Tales] (Yerevan, 1969), p. 40.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 329-30.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 335.

5. On Grigor Vkasaser's translations, see Garegin Zarbhanalian, *Matenadaran haikakan targmanutants nakhniats* (Venice, 1889), pp. 719-24. Ghevond Alishan, *Hayapatum*, vol. 2 (Venice, 1901), pp. 348-55.

6. See Nerses Akinian, *Niuter hai vkayabanutian usumnasirutian hamar* [Material for the Study of Armenian Hagiography] (Vienna, 1914), p. xii.

7. The appearance in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries of a number of men by the name of Kirakos (Kirakos vardapet, Kirakos Areveltsi, Kirakos Gediktsi, Kirakos Gandzaketsi) confused scholars seeking the true editor of *Haismavurk*. For an explanation of this question, see Armenuhi Srapian, "Banasirakan chshgrtumner" [Philologic Rectifications], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 4, 1972, pp. 137-45.

8. See G. Sargisian, "Grigor Ktgh. Anavarzetsi matenagir" [The Writer Krikor Catholicos Anavarzetsi], *Bazmavep*, 1949, p. 58-66.

9. See *Girk vor kochi Aismavurk* (The Grigor Tzerents edition) (Constantinople, 1730).

10. See *Vark yev vkayabanutiunk srbots, hatentir kaghialk i charentrats*, vol. 2 (Venice, 1874), pp. 124-30. *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 12 (Venice, 1854), pp. 85-96.

11. See *Hayots nor vkanere (1155-1843)* [Latter Armenian Martyrs (1155-1843)], ed. Hakob Manandian and Hrachia Acharian (Vagharshapat, 1903), pp. 73-93, 152-64, 245-60.

12. *Soperk haikakank*, vol. 14, pp. 8-87.

13. Knarik Ter-Davtian, *XI-XV dd. hai varkagrutiune* [Armenian Hagiography of Eleventh-Fifteenth Centuries] (Yerevan, 1980), p. 74.

14. See Edvard Baghdasarian, "Georg Skevratsu varke" [Georg Skevratsi's Vita], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 7, 1964, pp. 399-435. Vincent Mistrih has also worked on Georg Skevratsi's biography. See Vincent Mistrih, "Trois biographies de Georges de Skévra (extrait de Collectanea no. 14)," *Studia Orientalia Christiana Armenica* (Cairo, 1970).

15. See Ashot Abrahamian, *Hovhannes imastaseri matenagrutiune* (Yerevan, 1956), p. 119-24.

16. See Garegin Hovsepian, *Mkhitar Airivanetsi, noragiut ardzanagrutiun yev yerker* [Mkhitar Airivanetsi: Newly Discovered Record and Works] (Jerusalem, 1931).

17. See *Hayots nor vkanere (1115-1843)*, ed. Hakob Manandian and Hrachia Acharian (Vagharshapat, 1903), p. 264-72.

18. See Garegin Hovsepian, *Tovma Metzopetsu kianke* [Tovma Metzopetsi's Vita] (Vagharshapat, 1914), p. 1-13.

19. See *Girk vor kochi Aismavurk* (Constantinople, 1730), p. 531-35.

20. See *Hayots nor vkanere* (Vagharshapat, 1903).

21. Knarik S. Ter-Davtian, "Vkeyabanutian zhanri zargatsume hai matenagrutian mej" [The Development of the Hagiographic Genre in Armenian Literature], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1982, p. 32.

22. See Knarik S. Ter-Davtian, "Hai mijnadarian vark-hishatakarannere" [Armenian Medieval Hagiographic-Colophons], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 3, 1976, p. 107.

23. See Levon Khachikan, *XV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner* [Colophons of Fifteenth Century Manuscripts], vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1955), pp. 622-31.

24. See *Girk vor kochi Aismavurk* (Constantinople, 1730).

25. See *Ejer hai mijnadarian gegharvestakan ardzakits* [Excerpts from Armenian Literary Prose], edited and introduction by Karapet Melik-Ohanjanian (Yerevan, 1957), pp. XVIII-XIX.

26. Ashot Hovhannissian, *Drvagner hai azatagrakan mtki patmutian* [Episodes from the History of Armenian Liberation Thought], vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1959), p. 263; Hakob Anasian, *XVII dari azatagrakan sharzhumnere Arevmtian Hayastanum* [Seventeenth Century Liberation Movements in Western Armenia] (Yerevan, 1961), p. 53-54. In the seventeenth century an Italian missionary, M. Febur, in *The Present State of Turkey*, published in French (Paris), wrote about one version of the versified vision of Nerses, adding that its author was "another great Armenian of the same name." In the opinion of Ashot Hovhannissian, that "other" was probably Nerses Shnorhali; whereas, Hakop Anasian thinks that it is the seventeenth-century author Nerses Mokatsi.

27. See the sub-section on *Arakel Baghishetsi* in chapter 14 of the present volume.

28. See Levon Khachikian, *XIV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner* [Colophons of Fourteenth Century Armenian Manuscripts] (Yerevan, 1950). Vazgen Hakobian, *Hayeren dzeragreri XVII dari hishatakaranner* [Seventeenth Century Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts], vol. 1-2 (Yerevan, 1974-78).

29. See Nerses Akinian, "Hovsep Kostandnupolsetsti targmanich Haismavurki" [Hovsep Konstandnupolsetsi: Translator of *Haismavurk*], *Handes Amsoria*, 1957, pp. 1-12.

30. See Nerses Akinian, "Simeon Pghndzahanetsi yev ir targmanutiunnere vratserene" [Simeon Pghndzahanetsi and His Translations from Georgian] (Vienna, 1951).

31. I. M. Fil'shtinskii, *Arabskaya literatura 8-9-kh vekov* [Arab Literature of the Eighth-Ninth Centuries] (Moscow, 1978), p. 106.

32. On Armenian translations of *Kalila and Dimna*, see Nerses H. Parsumian, "Kalila u Timna kam Pitpayi arakagirk" [Kalila and Timna or the Pitpai Fable-Book], *Hask hayagitakan taregirk*, New Series, no. 1, 1980, pp. 215-30.

33. Aesop's fables were translated into Armenian for the first time in 1784 from English, in 1818 from French, and in 1972 from Russian which is the most comprehensive edition.

34. See Hakob S. Anasian, *Haikakan matenagitutium, V-XVIII dd.*, vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1959), pp. 1060-87.

35. The first collection of fables, *Girk araspelabanutians, vor asi Aghvesagirk* [Book of Fables Called *Fox-book*], was published in Amsterdam (1668), with two subsequent editions (1683 and 1698) in the same century. In 1825 Antoine-Jean de Saint-Martin published *Hatentir arakk Vardana vardapetin* [Selected Fables of Vardan Vardapet] in Armenian and French (forty-five fables). According to Nikoghayos Mar, the Arab as well as Georgian *Fox Books* were translated from Armenian (see Hakob S. Anasian, *Haikakan matenagitutium V-XVIII dd.*, vol. 1 (Yerevan, 1959), p. 1064.

36. Nikoghayos Mar, *Sborniki pritch Vardana* [Collected Works of the Cleric Vardan] (St. Petersburg, 1895-99); Manuk Abeghian, *Hayots mijnadarian araknere yev sotsialakan haraberutiunnere nrants mej* [Armenian Medieval Fables and Social Relations Reflected in Them] (Yerevan, 1933); Hovsep Orbeli, *Basni srednevekavoy Armenii* [Medieval Armenian Fable] (Leningrad, 1956).

37. His works include *Voghbk i vera bnutians i dimats Adama ar vordis nora* [Laments on Nature: From Adam to His Sons], *Hamarot meknutium margareutiann Yeremiayi* [A Brief Commentary on Jeremiah's Prophecy], *Vkayutium srbuin Khosrova* [Hagiography of Saint Khosrov], *Shark hairapetatsn Aghvanits* [List of Albanian Patriarchs], *Arakner* [Fables], *Haitararutium ughghaparutian havato ...* [Declaration of the Orthodoxy of Faith ...], *Tught khratakank* [Admonitive Epistles] and *Datastanagirk*.

38. There are numerous manuscripts of the *Datastanagirk*. There were three editions. The first is composed of a prologue and twenty five articles; the second of 130 secular and 124 ecclesiastical articles; and, the third is an abridgement of the first. The book was published for the first time by Vahan Bastamians, with an extensive introduction and notes. Mkhitar Gosh, *Datastanagirk hayots* [Armenian Book of Judgments] (Vagharshapat, 1880). It was published in Latin (abridged and edited) in 1862; in Polish in 1843; in Georgian in 1928 and 1963; in Russian in 1828. See Mkhitar Gosh, *Girk Datastani*, ed. Khosrov Torosian (Yerevan, 1975).

39. See *Hai mshakuiti nshanavor gortzichnere, V-XVIII darer* [Famous Figures of Armenian Culture, V-XVIII Centuries] (Yerevan, 1976), p. 274.

40. Mkhitar Gosh's fables were published for the first time in 1790 (Venice). They have been translated into French, Russian, and English. See *The Fables of Mkhitar Gosh*, translated by Robert Bedrosian (New York: Ashod Press, 1987).

41. *Arakk Mkhitar Goshi* [Fables of Mkhitar Gosh] (Venice, 1854), p. 69.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

46. See Hakob Anasian, *Vardan Aigektsin ir norahait yerkeri luisi tak* [Vardan Aigektsi in Light of His Newly Discovered Works] (Venice, 1969).

47. Nearly sixty of Aesop's fables were translated into Armenian in the Middle Ages, of which thirteen were used by Aigektsi in his sermons. See Emmanuel Pivazian, "Vardan Aigektsi," *Hai mshakuiti nshanavor gortzichnere, V-XVIII darer* (Yerevan, 1976), p. 287.

48. The number of fables attributed to Aigektsi varies widely. Nikoghayos Mar considers the fables in *Fox Book* to be a distinct edition of Vardanian tales. Pivazian attributes only thirty or so to Aigektsi. See Emmanuel Pivazian, *loc. cit.*

49. Nikoghayos Mar, *Sborniki pritch Vardana*, vol. 1, *Issledovanie* [Studies] (St. Petersburg, 1899). For the Armenian version see Hakobos Tashian, *Niuter patmutian hayots mijnadarian matenagrutian* [Topics in the History of Medieval Armenian Literature] (Vienna, 1900), p. 134-35.

50. *Zhoghovatzuik arakats Vartana* [Anthologies of Vardanian Fables], ed. Nikoghayos Mar, part 2 (St. Petersburg, 1894), p. 328.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 151

52. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Notes to Chapter 13

1. Leo, *Hayots patmutiun* [History of the Armenians], vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1946), p. 6.

2. On the activity and translations of the Unitores, see Ghevond Alishan, *Sisakan* [Province of Siunik] (Venice, 1893), pp. 382-84; Garegin Zarbhanalian, *Patmutiun hayeren dprutians*, vol. 2 (Venice, 1878), pp. 194-212; M. A. von den Oudenrijn, O.P., "Unitours et Dominicains d'Arménie," *Oriens Christianus*, No. 40, 1956; No. 42, 1958; No. 43, 1959; No. 65, 1961; M. A. von den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae Scriptores ordinis praedicatorum congregationis fratrum unitorum...* Bernae, 1960; F. Tournèize, "Les Frères-Unitours (Ounithorq, Miabanoghq) ou Dominicains arméniens (1330-1794)," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, vol. XXII, 1921-22, pp. 145-61, 249-79; Henri Gabrielian, *Hai pilisopayakan mtki patmutiun* [History of Armenian Philosophical Thought], vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1958), pp. 114-21; Levon Khachikian,

“Artazi haikakan ishkhanutiune yev Tzortzori dprotse” [The Armenian Princedom of Artaz and the School of Tzortzor], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 11, 1973, pp. 125-210; Hovhannes Krnetsi, *Haghags Kerakanin* [On the Grammarian—Dionysus Thrax], ed. Levon Khachikian and Suren Avagian (Yerevan, 1977), pp. 5-51; Sen Arevshatian, *K istorii filocofckikh shkol srednevekovoy Armenii (XIV v.)* [From the History of Medieval Armenian Philosophical Schools, Fourteenth Century] (Yerevan, 1980).

3. The Pope of Rome sent a special letter in 1246 to Hetum I, king of Cilicia, in which he considered the creed of the Armenian Church to be “schismatic.” He proposed that the “errant” Armenians follow the Pope of Rome since he considered himself head of the religious authority succeeding Christ’s beloved disciple, the Apostle Peter.

The Armenian Catholicos Kostandin I Bardzraberdtsi (1180s-1267) assiduously refused this proposal of the Pope and, counter to the apostles Peter and Paul, brought up the case of two other disciples of Christ, Bartholomew and Thadeus, who preached and died in Armenia and set the foundation of the Armenian Apostolic Church (see Maghakia Ormanian, *Azgapatum* [National History], vol. 2, Part 1 (Beirut, 1960), p. 1643.

4. Around the middle of the thirteenth century the Monastery of the Apostle Thadeus in Artaz county of Vaspurakan province (now Maku, Iran) was reconstructed through a decree of Catholicos Kostandin Bardzraberdtsi, and became the center of a newly created diocese of the Armenian church. Armenian rule was restored after a hiatus of many centuries and lasted until 1426, about one and a half centuries. The Armenian princedom of Artaz encompassed several areas of Vaspurakan, as well as Atrpatakan, including the cities of Maragha and Tabriz—the administrative center of the Mongol rulers established in Iran and Transcaucasia.

5. Bartholomew’s real surname is de Podio; however, the names “the younger” (Parvus) and “of Bonon” (Bononiensis) were also bestowed upon him. (See M. A. von den Oudenrijn, *Linguae Haicanae* ..., p. 304). He was known to Armenians as the bishop of Maragha and was entitled Bartholomew Maraghatsi.

6. Maghakia Ormanian, *Azgapatum*, vol. 2, Part 1 (Beirut, 1960), p. 1844.

7. According to Clemens Galanus, Armenian Unitores outside of Armenia also constructed monasteries in Georgia, and in Kaffa (Theodosia), in Crimea, whose Armenian colony moved in 1475 to Genoa after the Turks conquered the city. See Clemens Galanus, *Miabanutium hayots surb yekeghetsvuin end metzi surb yekeghetsvuin Hrovma* [Conciliation of the Holy Armenian Church with the Greater Holy Church of Rome], vol. 1 (Rome, 1650), p. 523.

8. The Catholicized Armenians of Krna, Salitagh, Aprakunis, Aparaner, Shahaponk, and some other villages of the Nakhijevan region, resisting the many pressures exerted by Muslims and the Armenian Church, continued in existence until the seventeenth century and then accepted Islam en masse. See Hovhannes Krnetsi, *Haghags Kerakanin* (Yerevan, 1977), p. 29.

9. Among Armenians, until the appearance of Hovhannes Krnetsi's work *Short Compendium on the Grammarian*, Dionysius Thrax's *Art of Grammar* was studied and reviewed for over a millenium. Armenian commentators frequently elucidated the grammatical structure of Greek and, by imitation, that of Armenian and the rules of ancient and medieval Armenian. Hovhannes Krnetsi deviates from this accepted practice. He follows here more the work *Institutioni Grammatici* [Grammatical Definitions] of fifth-century Latin grammarian Priscianus of Caesarea, who gained recognition in the Middle Ages, and presents a comprehensive description of Armenian based on the grammatical principles of Latin. Hovhannes's book consists of six chapters in which he discourses on the study of the alphabet, sound, parts of speech, and conjunctions of the Armenian language (in modern terms, the phonology, morphology, and syntax of Armenian) and also explains questions concerning pronunciation, metrics, and the art of the explication of texts. See Hovhannes Krnetsi, *Haghags Kerakanin*, study by Levon S. Khachikian (Yerevan, 1977).

10. The letter is published in Clemens Galanus, *Miabanutiun hayots surb yekeghetsvuin end metzi surb yekeghetsvuin Hrovma*, vol.1 (Rome, 1650), pp. 513-21.

11. Henri Gabrielian, *Hai pilisopayakan mtki patmutiun*, vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1958), pp. 120-21.

12. The School of Metzop Monastery was already in existence from the end of the twelfth century. That which Grigor Tatevatsi augmented with his 160 students and eight *vardapets*, elevated the Metzopavank School to the educational level of Tatev University—that is, of academies.

13. Maghakia Ormanian, *Azgapatum*, vol. 2, Part 1, p. 1982.

14. See Sen Arevshatian, "Tatevi pilisopayakan dprotse yev Grigor Tatevatsu ashkharhahayiatske" [The Philosophy School of Tatev and Grigor Tatevatsi's World View], *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 4, 1958, p. 137.

15. *Patmutiun nahangin Sisakan, ararial Stepannosi Vorbelian arkepiskoposi Siunats* [History of Sisakan Province, by Stepanos Vorbelian, Archbishop of Siunik], with annotations by Karapet Shahnazariants, vol. 1 and 2 (Paris, 1859).

16. For an analysis of Stepanos Orbelian's *Voghb i dimats Katoghikein*, see chapter 14 of the present volume.

17. See Garegin Hovsepien, *Tovma Metzopetsu kianke* [Tovma Metzopetsi's Life] (Vagharshapat, 1914).

Notes to Chapter 14

1. A valuable and comprehensive study on medieval lamentations is Poghos Khachatryan's *Hai mijnadarian patmakan voghbere, XIV-XVII dd.* [Armenian Medieval Historical Lamentations, Fourteenth-Seventeenth Centuries] (Yerevan, 1969).

2. The poem *Lament for Jerusalem* was first published, with certain abridgments, in the Armenian original and French translation by the French armenologist Edouard Dulaurier (*Recueil des historiens des croisades. Documents arméniens* [Paris, 1869], pp. 272-307). The exhaustive critical study and publication of this writer's complete works have been accomplished by Asatur Mnatsakanian in Grigor Tgha's *Banasteghtzutiunner yev poemner* [Verses and Poems] (Yerevan, 1972).

3. Grigor Tgha, *Banasteghtzutiunner yev poemner*, pp. 298-99.

4. Nerses Shnorhali, *Haghags yerknii yev zarduts nora, Hanelukner, Voghb Yedesio* (Yerevan, 1968), p. 51.

5. The original text of Stepanos Orbelian's work was published under the title *Voghb i S. Katoghiken* [Lament Unto the Holy Cathedral], with a foreword and annotations, by Karapet Kostaniants (Tiflis, 1885).

6. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 4 (Yerevan, 1970), p. 266.

7. Among those who wrote on the life and works of Kecharetsi see Hakobos Tashian, *Usumnasirutiunk Stuin Kalistenia Varuts Agheksandri* [Study of Pseudo-Callisthenes' Life of Alexander] (Vienna, 1892); Garegin Hovsepiyan, *Khaghbakiank yev Proshiank hayots patmutian mej* [The Khaghbakians and Proshians in Armenian History], Part 1 (Vagharshapat, 1928); Mayis Avdalbegian, *Khachatur Kecharetsi* (Yerevan, 1958).

8. *Khachatur Kecharetsi*, prepared by Mayis Avdalbegian (Yerevan, 1958), p. 131.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

10. The Armenian translation, with a comparative study of ten manuscripts of the *Alexander Romance*, was published in 1842 (Venice) by Mkhitarist philologists. English translation by Albert Mugrdich Wolohojian, *The Romance of Alexander the Great by Pseudo-Callisthenes* (New York: Columbia, 1969). For the Armenian editions of the *Alexander Romance* see Hasmik S. Simonian's article "Agheksandr Makedonatsu patmutian hayeren targmanutiune yev nra khmbagrutiunnere" [The Armenian Translation and Variants of the Romance of Alexander the Macedonian], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1979, pp. 113-28.

11. Based on a number of allusions, the author of the *Romance* has been considered to be Callisthenes of Olynth which, though rejected by researchers, nevertheless, has again been tied to the name Callisthenes and

called Pseudo-Callisthenes. See Hakobos Tashian, *Usumnasirutiunk Stuin Kalistenia Varuts Agheksandri* (Vienna, 1892), p. 13.

12. The national songs in medieval Armenian poetry called *hairens*, rapidly spread into prose starting in the tenth century and created a new kind of verse called the *kafa* (from the Arabic *gafiya*, meaning 'verse rhyme'). *Kafas* are common in medieval literature, essentially four- to eight-lined and fifteen-syllable uni-rhymed lines inserted in prose literary works. Appearing at the time of the secularization of literature (tenth century), *kafas* continued to develop until the sixteenth century, totaling 5,000 verse lines. They were weaved around various episodes of secular tales and translated stories, and they became popular with their poetic meter, rhyme, and accessible language. Sometimes, these translated stories acquired an Armenian flavor and outlook and became national artifacts. Of the translated works enriched with *kafas*, the most important were: the Story of the Copper City, the *Romance of Alexander*, the Story of the Child and the Girl, and the histories of Armenian kings. See Hasmik Simonian, *Hai mijnadarian kafaner* [Armenian Medieval Kafas] (Yerevan, 1975).

13. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 4, p. 282.

14. See *Grigoris Aghtamartsi*, prepared by Mayis Avdalbegian (Yerevan, 1963), pp. 324-28. In manuscript no. 33(24) of the St. Vlas Hostel of Rome, the oldest translation of "The Copper City" is found, completed before the year 1000 by Davit Kiurapaghat (see Nerses Akinian, "Zruits Pghndze kaghaki" [Tale of the Copper City], *Handes Amsoria*, no. 1-4, 1958, pp. 21-49).

15. The evaluation and appreciation of Siunetsi's work owes a great deal to the Mkhitarists of Venice. Especially important was Mkrtich Poturian, who published Siunetsi's *Adamgirk* [Adam Book] in 1907 and his odes in 1914 in separate volumes in Venice. Others who have written criticism about Siunetsi are Arshak Chopanian, Ghevond Alishan, Garegin Zarbhanalian, Nerses Akinian, and Levon Khacherian.

16. *Adamgirk Arakel Siunetsvo*, published by Mkrtich Poturian (Venice, 1907), pp. 7-10.

17. See *Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dnei* [Armenian Poetry From Ancient Times to the Present Days], edited and with an introduction by Valeri Bryusov (Moscow, 1916), p. 18.

18. *Arakel Siunetsi yev ir kertvatznere* [Arakel Siunetsi and His Poems], study and publication by Mkrtich Poturian (Venice, 1914), pp. 1-7.

19. Because of the similarity of their names and the coincidence of their lifespans, Arakel Siunetsi and Arakel Baghishetsi were confused with one another by philologists, who had difficulty distinguishing their works. The issues and questions surrounding mistaken attributions have been addressed by Mkrtich Poturian, Garegin Zarbhanalian, Ghazar Jahketsi, Nikoghayos Karamian, Arshak Chopanian, Hakob Anasian, and others. The first to recognize the value of Arakel Baghishetsi's literary work were the historian

Mikayel Chamchian and the philologists Sukias Somalian, Ghevond Alishan, and Karamian. Arshak Chopanian published Baghishetsi's *Lament* in the 1901 edition of *Anahit* and in 1903 translated his "Ode of the Nightingale and Rose" into French. An analysis of Arakel Baghishetsi's life and works, as well as the most recent critical research on his texts, belong to the pen of Arshaluis Ghazinian. See *Arakel Baghishetsi*, study by Arshaluis Ghazinian (Yerevan, 1971).

20. Nearly eighty items of prose and verse works of *Grigor Khlatetsi*, including odes, chants, panegyrics, lamentations, and martyrologies have survived. In his poetic lament, *Memoirs of Disaster*, he describes the hardships brought on by the Mongol invasions.

21. It is not known in what language the original story of Joasaph, widespread throughout the East, was written. Its variants are divided into two groups: Arabic-Georgian and Greek (see *Nkaragrutiun hogevor varuts Hovasapu, vordvo tagavorin Hndkats, grial Hovhannu kravnavorin* [Description of the Spiritual Life of Joasaph, Son of the Indian King, Written by Hovhannes the Cleric], study by Mesrop Ter-Movsesian [Vagharshapat, 1897], p. 13). It is theorized that the original was written in Pahlavi in the sixth century. In the opinion of Mar, it was written in Syriac in the fifth or sixth centuries, and then translated into other languages (see Nikoghayos Mar, *Zhitie sv. Barlgama Sirokavkazskovo* [St. Barlgam Sirokavkasian's Life] *Agiografi-cheskie materialy po gruzinskim rukopicyam Ibera* [Iberian Hagiographic Materials in Georgian Manuscripts], no. 2, St. Peterburg, 1901, pp. 99-100).

22. *Soperk haikakank*, no. 6 (Vienna, 1853), pp. 89-104.

23. According to historical evidence, such treaties actually existed between Trdat III and the Roman Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. *Dashants tught*, however, was composed in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries by a Cilician pro-Latin elite at the time of the Crusades, pursuing religious and political aims. The *Letter* says that the Roman Emperor crowned the Armenian King Trdat and that Pope Sylvester gave St. Gregory the Illuminator ecclesiastic authority to ordain the patriarchs of Georgians and Albanians, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria. In the *Letter* Constantine predicts the fall of the Arshakuni dynasty, a period of hard times, and then the liberation of the country, to be accomplished by the Romans. The *Letter's* intent was to subject the Armenian Church to the sovereignty of Rome, in exchange for which, the Vatican would assist the Armenians by military force.

24. The lamentations written on the occasion of the fall of Byzantium by Abraham Ankiuratsi and Arakel Baghishetsi (poets contemporary to the events) are presented with a comparative analysis by Hakob Anasian, *Haikakan aghbiurnere Biuzandiayi ankman masin* [Armenian Sources On the Fall of Byzantium] (Yerevan, 1957). Anasian prepared the critical texts of the lamentation based on the comparison of seventeen versions of Ankiuratsi and

fifteen complete and defective versions of Baghishetsi. In that volume, Yeremia Keomurchian's "Hankumn Biuzandioni" lamentation, extracted from his versified opus *Patmutiun hamarot 400 tarvo Osmantsots tagavoratsn* [Concise History of 400 Years of Ottoman Kings], is published for the first time.

25. See K. N. Grigorian, *Iz istorii russko-armyanskikh kul'turnikh svyazei X-XVII vekov* [From the History of Russo-Armenian Cultural Relations in Tenth-Seventeenth Centuries] (Moscow-Leningrad, 1953), pp. 332-33.

26. Hakob Anasian, *Haikakan aghbiurnere Biuzantiayi ankman masin* (Yerevan, 1957), p. 64.

27. Ibid, p. 70-71.

28. Ibid, p. 72-73.

29. Even in 1438-39, at the Council of Ferrara-Florence organized by Pope Eugene III, the Byzantine Emperor John VIII and the Patriarch signed an agreement on the unity of the Greek and Roman Churches, according to which the Pope promised to help the Greeks defend themselves against the Turks. This agreement met with opposition from the Greek clergy in Constantinople and was not ratified. The last emperor, Constantine Dragas, foreseeing the gathering storm, again applied to Pope Nicholas V for assistance, with a promise to effectuate the unification of the Churches. But once again, the country opposed the pro-Latin movement and the issue of church reunification was suspended. Such were the conditions in Byzantium, when in 1453 the Turkish army under Mahomed II invaded the city.

Notes to Chapter 15

1. See Ghevond Alishan, *Hin havatk kam hetanosakan kronk hayots* [Ancient Beliefs or Pagan Religions of Armenians] (Venice, 1895). Karapet Kostanians, *Hayots hetanosakan krone* [The Pagan Religion of Armenians] (Vagharshapat, 1879).

2. Karapet Melik-Ohanjanian, "Arajaban Rostom-Zal hai-iranakan zhoghovrdakan vepi" [Preface to *Rostom-Zal*, the Armenian-Iranian Folk Epic], *Firdusi* anthology (Yerevan, 1934), p. 166.

3. Babken Chugaszian, *Hai-iranakan grakan arnchutiunner* [Armeno-Iranian Literary Relations] (Yerevan, 1963), pp. 27-28. See D. I. Kobidze, *Persidskie istochniki gruzinskikh versiy Shakh-Name* [Persian Sources Regarding the Georgian Versions of *Shah-namah*] (Tbilisi, 1959).

4. Middle Armenian, also called the second written Armenian, came into use from the twelfth century and lasted until the seventeenth. After the seventeenth century starts the era of Modern literary Armenian (the third written language) although the former continued its existence, while the Modern developed alongside.

5. Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 7 (Yerevan, 1975), pp. 331-32.
6. Valeri Bryusov, editor, *Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dney* [Armenian Poetry From Ancient Times to the Present] (Moscow, 1916), p. 38.
7. Investigation of Armenian metrics has interested Johan Joachim Schröder (*Aramian lezvin gandz* [Treasury of the Armenian Language], Amsterdam, 1711), Mkhitarist father Arsen (Antimosian) Bagratuni (*Kerakanutiun gaghghiakan* [French Grammar], Venice, 1821), Yedvard vardapet Hiurmiuzian (*Ardzern banasteghtzutiun* [Portable Poetry], Venice, 1839), Arsen vardapet Aitenian (*Knnakan kerakanutiun ardi hayeren lezvi* [Critical Grammar of Modern Armenian], Vienna, 1866), Avetik Bahatryan (*Hin hayots taghachapakan arveste* [Metric Art of Ancient Armenians], Shushi, 1891), Atanes Tiroyan ("Asorakan yev haikakan taghachaputiune" [Syriac and Armenian Metrics], *Bazmavep* (1899, 1907), and others. Abeghian produced a comprehensive examination of features of Armenian metrics in his study *Hayots lezvi taghachaputiun* [Metrics of Armenian Language] (Yerevan, 1933). Varag Nersisian's *Hai mijnadarian taghergutian gegharvestakan mijotsnere (13-16 dd.)* [Literary Techniques of Armenian Medieval Verse] (Yerevan, 1976) is a new essay in exposition of the general attributes of medieval poetic art.
8. Three modes of metrics exist: Greek, Indian, and Arabic. Greek is considered the most widespread of these. Indian served peoples of the Far East, mainly Tibetan and Mongol. While Arabic, together with Moslem culture, spread among nations of the Near East. For this reason, the influence of the Arabic mode is evident on literatures of Persian, Turkish, Tatar, Tajik, and Uzbek peoples. It has also affected Armenian and Georgian literature.
9. Of 222 poems from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, Varag Nersisian considers ninety-five to be written in iambic tetrasyllabic feet, fifty-eight in meter of *hairen*, and finds twenty-five with the 6-5 or 5-6 structure, while the remaining forty-four to be written in different meters (see V. Nersisian, *Hai mijnadarian taghergutian ...*, p. 227).
10. Frik, *Tagher* [Poems] (Yerevan, 1982), p. 56.
11. Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher* (Yerevan, 1962), p. 163.
12. Frik, *Tagher*, p. 152.
13. Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher* (Yerevan, 1960), p. 182.
14. Regarding *hairens* and their metrics, see the *Hairens* section in chapter 17 of the present volume.
15. Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher*, p. 146.
16. *Grigoris Aghtamartsi*, study by Mayis Avdalbegian, with critical texts and commentary (Yerevan, 1963), p. 225.
17. See *Publiosi Vergilia Marovni Mshakakank* [The Georgics of Publius Vergilius Maro] (Venice, 1847), p. 12.

18. See Ruben Vorberian's and Arshak Alpoyachian's articles in issues 31 and 35 of *Masis* monthly of Constantinople in 1900.

19. *Hovhannes Yernkatsi*, study by Armenuhi Srapian, with texts (Yerevan, 1958), p. 163.

20. Kostantin Yernkatsi, *Tagher*, p. 119.

21. Frik, *Tagher*, p. 77.

22. For a long time the two Hovhannes Yernkatsis called Pluz and Tzotzoretsi, who lived in the thirteenth century, were confused and regarded as one person in scholarship (Mikayel Chamchian, Ghevond Alishan, Garegin Srvandztiants, Garegin Zarbhanalian, and others). Levon Khachikian clarified the issue and considered Pluz Hovhannes Yernkatsi as a poet, preacher, and scholar, while Tzortzoretsi as an author (see Khachikian, *XIV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner* [Colophons of Fourteenth Century Armenian Manuscripts], Yerevan, 1950, p. 649). Nerses Akinian, Harutiun Kiurtian, and Armenuhi Srapian also confirm the same opinion (see *Hovhannes Yernkatsi*, ed. Armenuhi Srapian, with study and texts, Yerevan, 1958, pp. 25-38).

23. The survey of Hovhannes Pluz Yernkatsi's writings is contained in the expansive studies of Armenuhi Srapian, Georg Grigorian, *Hovhannes Yernkatsu pilisopayakan hayiatsknere* [The Philosophical Views of Hovhannes Yernkatsi] (Yerevan, 1962), Edvard Baghdasarian, *Hovhannes Yernkatsin yev nra khratakan ardzake* [Hovhannes Yernkatsi and His Admonitory Prose] (Yerevan, 1977), and Hovhannes Yernkatsi, *Havakumn meknutian kerakani* [Collation of Grammar Commentary] (Los Angeles, 1983), published with Levon G. Khacherian's research, plus numerous articles.

24. Nikoghayos Adonts, *Dioniskiy Frakiyskiy i armianskie tolkovateli* (Dionysius Thrax and Armenian Commentators), St. Petersburg, 1915, p. LXXXII.

25. Hovhannes Yernkatsi, *Havakumn*, p. 16.

26. *Hovhannes Yernkatsi*, p. 139.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-87.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

29. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 4 (Yerevan, 1970), p. 349.

30. *Hovhannes Yernkatsi*, p. 158.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

36. Karo Sasuni, *Patmutiun mijnadaru hai grakanutian* [History of Medieval Armenian Literature] (Beirut, 1954), p. 25.

37. *Hovhannes Yernkatsi*, p. 183.

38. Vastly divergent observations have been made by scholars regarding Frik's personality, name, the era in which he lived, and circumstances of his biography. It is assumed that Frik was his pseudonym, meaning "roasted wheat." Several suggestions have been advanced to identify Frik's birthplace, the only source to establish which was the language of his own poems. In historian Ashot Hovhannisian's opinion, Frik's idiom "is closer to the branch of Western Armenian dialects" (see Hovhannisian, *Frike patma-knnakan luisi tak* [Frik in Historio-critical Highlight], Yerevan, 1955, p. 117). Based on this, Hakob Zhamkochian thinks that Frik was born in one of the cities of Western Armenia, since the language he employs is similar to the literary Armenian of Cilicia (see Zhamkochian, "Patma-banasirakan ditoghutiunner Friki yev nra tagheri masin" [Historio-philological Remarks Regarding Frik and His Chansons], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1958, pp. 195-204).

The question of whether Frik was a cleric or laic has also been examined. His own expressions, "spoken by Frik the laic," or "by Frik the eloquent laic," have been a basis for many (Archbishop Tirair, Aram Ghanalanian, Mkrtich Mkrian, Ashot Abrahamian, and others) to suppose that Frik was non-ordained. That has been considered unacceptable and doubtful by a few scholars (Ghevond Alishan and Manuk Abeghian).

39. A few Armenian and foreign scholars have written about Frik, though not extensively. Of enormous service to the study and assembling of his verse is Archbishop Tirair (Melik Mushkambariants), who extracted and collected together the poet's legacy from various sources and published *Friki Divan* (Frik's Archives) volume (New York, 1952) with extensive introduction, annotations, comparative text, and glossary. Abeghian (*Yerker*, vol. 4, pp. 289-342, 456-66), Hovhannisian (*Frike patma-knnakan ...*), Zhamkochian ("Patma-banasirakan ditoghutiunner ..."), and others have also contributed to the study of Frik.

40. Hovhannisian, *Frike patma-knnakan ...*, p. 55.

41. *Hayots hin yev mijnadarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia* [Anthology of Ancient and Medieval Armenian Poetry], ed. Arshak Madoyian and Garnik Ananian (Yerevan, 1979), p. 181.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

43. The poem "On Arghun Ghan and Bugha" is given a different explanation in Hovhannisian's study in connection with the words "masa" and "masaschik" (see Zhamkochian, "Patma-banasirakan ditoghutiunner...", pp. 195-204.)

44. *Hayots hin yev mijnadarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia*, p. 175.

45. The question of authorship of the poem "Grievance" has occasioned dissension in scholarship. Arshak Chopanian, in the preface to Kuchak's *Divan* [Archives], and after him Archbishop Tirair have considered that poem not as Frik's but a certain Barsegh's, whose name Frik mentions

between lines (see Kuchak, *Divan* [Paris, 1902], annotation on page 12, and Frik, *Divan*, p. 108). Ashot Abrahamian regards "Grievance" as a work widespread among the people, embellished by Frik, Barsegh, and Hovhannes Sarkavag (see Abrahamian's review on the occasion of the publication of Frik's *Divan* [*Ejmiatzin*, January 1954, p. 37.]) It is even suggested that "Grievance" is a borrowing or perhaps translation from Persian (see Khoren Aramuni, "Chshmartutiunner Friki *Gangat-i masin*" [Truths Regarding Frik's 'Grievance'], *Navasard*, no. 10, 1983, pp. 57-60). In texts of the history of Armenian literature, "Grievance" is considered Frik's creation.

46. *Hayots hin yev mijnadarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia*, p. 169.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 170-71.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 197-98.

51. Frik, *Divan* (New York, 1952), p. 486.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 454.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 261-62.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 258-59.

55. Kostandin Yerznkatsi's poems were infrequently copied during the Middle Ages, the cause of which is considered to be the secular content of his songs. Only seven of his poems have variants, while all the rest are in a single manuscript, found in the Venice Mkhitarist library.

The first comprehensive publication of Yerznkatsi's oeuvre was done by Mkrtich Poturian, *Kostandin Yerznkantsi XIII daru zhoghovrdakan banasteghtz yev iur kertvatznere* [Kostandin Yerznkatsi: Thirteenth-Century Folk Poet and His Poems] (Venice, 1905). Arshak Chopanian (*Anahit*, no. 5, 1905, pp. 93-106), Manuk Abeghian, (*Yerker*, vol. 4, pp. 356-400), Armenuhi Srapian (Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher* [Poems] (Yerevan, 1962), and others have also been occupied by the analysis and publications of his works.

56. Kostandin Yerznkantsi, *Tagher* (Yerevan, 1962), p. 181.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 128-29.

62. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 4, p. 366.

63. The first to treat the rose and nightingale allegory in Persian literature is considered to be Sheikh Farideddin Attari in his boemas *Tale of the Fowls* and *Bolbolnamah*. Both of these works are written in Sufic ideology, risen in Islam during the eighth to ninth centuries, where man's mystic aspiration to reach God is personified through self-annihilation of the "I."

In the boema *Tale of the Fowls*, Pheasant explains to the birds how she has reached the legendary Simorgh bird, which is likened to sunlight. She explicates the secret of passing seven valleys (which are the seven steps of mortification) and the purpose of reaching Simorgh (which is the unification of man's soul with God). Nightingale, who has joined the conversation, resigns from accompanying the birds, arguing that he could not leave his beloved, Rose. Through Nightingale ephemeral pleasures are criticized, since Rose herself has a life of only a few days.

In Persian poetry, the rose and nightingale allegory has a deep philosophical posture and is devoid of the warm emotional impression one gets reading the Armenian examples of that romance.

In Attari's other work, *Bolbolnamah*, Nightingale is criticized for his love by Pheasant who is invited for debate in the palace of Saliman, king of fowls and animals (see Varag Nersisian, "Vardi u sokhaki ailabanutian hai-parskakan mshakumneri arnchutian harts masin" [Regarding the Issue of the Relationship of Armenian and Persian Versions of the Rose and Nightingale Allegory], *Banber Yerevani Hamalsarani*, no. 3, 1969).

64. Arshaluis Ghazinian, *Arakel Baghishetsi* (Yerevan, 1971), p. 101.

65. Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher*, pp. 141-42.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 155.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

69. Valeri Bryusov, *Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nash-ikh dnei*, p. 50.

70. Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher*, pp. 200-201.

71. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-93.

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

75. See *Firdusi* anthology (Yerevan, 1934), pp. 119-28.

76. Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher*, p. 209.

77. Saying "in tones of *Shahnamah*," Abeghian had the poetic meter of Firdawsi's *Shahnamah* in mind (see Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 4 [Yerevan, 1970], pp. 396-97). Another scholar, Albert Shahsuvarian, objects to that and considers it more probable that for the poem to be "recited in tone of" means singing the verse in the same musical tune, with which melody *Shahnamah* was sung. "It is exactly for this that Yerznkatsi resorted to the meter of *Shahnamah*," he writes, "because in the event of selecting another meter the melody would not have conformed to the verse" (see Shahsuvarian, *Shahnamen yev haikakan aghbiurnere* [*Shahnamah* and Armenian Sources], Yerevan, 1967, pp. 170-71).

78. Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher*, p. 140.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 193.

80. Ibid., p. 117.

81. Ibid., p. 158.

82. For centuries Hovhannes Tlkurantsi was erroneously considered to be a poet of the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries and identified with Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, the Catholicos of Sis. That opinion was held by famous historians Mikayel Chamchian and Leo, scholars Aristakes Tevkants, Karapet Kostaniants, Maghakia Ormanian, Abeghian, and others. Only lately, in the mid-twentieth century, was it demonstrated that poet Tlkurantsi and his namesake, the Catholicos of Sis, are different persons. Scholarly studies revealed that songster Hovhannes Tlkurantsi lived and created earlier (in the second half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries) than Catholicos Tlkurantsi (see Hovhannes Tlkuransti, *Tagher* [Songs], introduction and commentary by Emmanuel Pivazian [Yerevan, 1960], pp. 15-34.)

Valuable publications regarding Tlkurantsi are Kostaniants's work, with extensive notes, entitled *Hovhannes Tlkurantsin yev iur taghere* [Hovhannes Tlkurantsi and His Songs] (Tiflis, 1892), as well as the volumes *Taghagirk* [Book of Songs], ed. by N. Bogharian, Jerusalem, 1958), and Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher* [Songs], introduction and commentary by Pivazian (Yerevan, 1960). In Pivazian's work, twenty-four songs with romantic and moralistic themes are included and five complementary, which he has placed in the book's "Addendum," considering them hypothetical.

83. Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher*, introduction and commentary by Pivazian (Yerevan, 1960), p. 163.

84. Abeghian, *Yerker*, vol. 4, p. 486.

85. Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher*, p. 160.

86. Ibid., pp. 119-20.

87. Ibid., pp. 157-59.

88. Ibid., p. 217. Skepticism has been expressed regarding the authorship of this magnificent medieval song. Mention of the name "Mad Hovhannes" ending the poem as well as the spirit and mood of the song have convinced scholars Babgen Kiuleserian and Abeghian that it belongs to Tlkurantsi, while Chopanian was reluctant to confirm it (*Hai Ejer* [Armenian Papers], Paris, 1912, p. XXXVI). Pivazian has placed it in the addendum section of the anthology he prepared, Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher* (Yerevan, 1960).

89. This opinion of Bryusov's is about one Hovhannes, who was confirmed by subsequent scholars to be Hovhannes Tlkurantsi himself (Valeri Bryusov, *Poeziya Armenii*, pp. 53-54.).

90. Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Tagher*, pp. 164-68.

91. Ibid., p. 169.

92. Ibid., p. 173.

93. Ibid., p. 190.

94. Ibid., p. 153.

95. Ibid., p. 140.

96. Ibid., p. 148.

97. Ibid., p. 142.

98. Ibid., p. 158.

99. Ibid., p. 142.

100. Valuable opinion regarding Mkrtych Naghash's oeuvre has been expressed by Mkrtych Poturian (*Bazmavep*, 1905-1906); Abraham Zaminian (*Hai grakanutian patmutiun* [History of Armenian Literature], part 1, Nor Nakhijevan, 1914); Abeghian (*Hayots hin grakanutian patmutiun* [History of Ancient Armenian Literature], vol. 2, Yerevan, 1946), and others. A comprehensive treatise on Mkrtych Naghash's creation is Kostaniants's *Mkrtych Naghash yev iur taghere* [Mkrtych Naghash and His Songs] (Vagharshapat, 1898), as well as Edvard Khondkarian's *Mkrtych Naghash* (Yerevan, 1965).

101. *Mkrtych Naghash*, prepared by Khondkarian, pp. 113-14.

102. Ibid., p. 117.

103. Ibid., pp. 169-70.

104. Ibid., p. 175.

105. Ibid., p. 129.

106. First to comment on Grigoris Aghtamartsi and his songs was Ghevond Hovnanian in his study "Mijnadarian azgayin taghachaputian ramkakharn" [Medieval National Vernacularized Verse], *Handes Amsoria* (1896), pp. 111-19. After Hovnanian, Kostaniants came forward with an extensive study in a separate book, *Grigoris Aghtamartsin yev iur taghere* [Grigoris Aghtamartsi and His Songs] (Tiflis, 1898), where he discusses the poet's biography and oeuvre, including fourteen songs. Mkrtych Poturian analyzed Aghtamartsi's songs in *Bazmavep* (1905, pp. 491-500), where he clarified the list of his chansons and certain data of his life. The comprehensive embrace of the poet's literary heritage with critical texts was accomplished by Nerses Akinian, in the *Grigoris Arajin katoghikos Aghtamari* [Grigoris I Catholicos of Aghtamar] (Vienna, 1958) study (examining twenty-four authentic and twelve inauthentic songs), and Mayis Avdalbegian with the *Grigoris Aghtamartsi* (Yerevan, 1963) study (including twenty-seven songs). Abeghian, Garegin Hovsepiyan, Chopanian, and others have also commented on Aghtamartsi's literary and pictographic skills.

107. *Grigoris Aghtamartsi*, ed. Mayis Avdalbegian, p. 33.

108. Ibid., p. 48.

109. Ibid., pp. 169-70.

110. Due to similarities of titles, the first line of the song is presented as a caption.

111. *Grigoris Aghtamartsi*, p. 202.

112. Ibid., p. 201.

113. Ibid., pp. 242-43, 245.

114. Ibid., pp. 213-14.

115. Ibid., pp. 206-07, 209.

116. Ibid., p. 130.

117. Akinian, *Grigoris Arajin katoghikos ...*, p. CXXXVII.

118. Ibid., p. XCI.

119. Kostaniants initially takes the chanson to have a love and beauty subtext (Kostaniants, *Grigoris Aghtamartsin ...* [Tiflis, 1898], p. 14), while later he looks for patriotic sentiments there (*Vostochnye drevnosti* [Oriental Antiquities], vol. 4, Moscow, 1913).

120. *Grigoris Aghtamartsi*, pp. 58-59.

121. Ibid., p. 131.

122. Ibid., pp. 60-61.

123. Ibid., pp. 225-26.

124. Ibid., p. 235.

125. Ibid., p. 223.

126. Ibid., pp. 134-35.

127. Ibid., p. 137.

128. Ibid., p. 141.

129. Ibid., p. 237.

130. Long-lasting debates raged in scholarship regarding this poem. Many researchers (Y. Torosian, Akinian, Asatur Mnatsakanian) do not find Aghtamartsi the author of the poem "Every morning and a light" and consider it a folk song. Based on numerous facts and comparative investigations, Avdalbegian allows Aghtamartsi as the likely author of the chanson (see *ibid.*, pp. 312-24).

131. Ibid., p. 254.

132. Ibid., pp. 254, 260, 261-62.

133. Ibid., pp. 264, 257.

134. Akinian, "Grigoris Aghtamartsi," *Handes Amsoria*, 1915, p. 39.

135. Chugaszian, *Hai-iranakan grakan arnchutiunner* [Armeno-Iranian Literary Relations] (Yerevan, 1963), pp. 129-30.

136. There are twenty to twenty-five hand-copied facsimiles preserved among the manuscripts held at the Mesrop Mashtots Matenadaran of Yerevan.

137. See Kostaniants, p. 25; Akinian, "Grigoris Aghtamartsi," p. 39.

138. *Grigoris Aghtamartsi*, p. 229.

139. Ibid., p. 138.

140. Opinions, later dismissed, that the author of that chanson was Artzkeatsi himself, have been expressed by Akinian and others (see *ibid.*, pp. 309-12).

141. Ibid., p. 239.

Notes to Chapter 16

1. For the literature of the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, see Hasmik Sahakian, *Ush mijnadari hai banasteghtzutiune (XVI-XVII dd.)* [Armenian Poetry of the Late Middle Ages, Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries] (Yerevan, 1975).

2. *Simeon Aparanetsi* was from the village of Aparank, in the province of Mokk. In the history of Armenian culture he is known as a historian, poet, and famous educator, teaching in Metzop, Karin, and Van. Of his works, the epic poem *Vipasanutiun saks Pahlavuniatsn zarmi yev Mamikoniatsn seri* [Romance Regarding the Pahlavuni Kin and the Mamikonian Race], where he composed the story of the Pahlavunis and the Mamikonian clan, is considered significant.

3. *Hakob Tokhatetsi* (1563-1657/1663) lived in the city of Yash in the land of Olakhs (Valachia), then Zamostsa in Western Ukraine. He authored elegies, monitive songs, hymns, odes, and an unpublished work called *Hakobi Saghmosaran* [Hakob's Psalmery]—a metric recultivation of Old Testament psalms. He translated from Latin into Armenian *Yotn imastasirats patmutiun* [The Story of Seven Sages] (1614), published nine times, and translated from Armenian into Turkish, Russian, Georgian, and French. Tokhatetsi also scribed manuscript tomes, among them the renowned *Gerla Hymnal* (see Nerses Akinian, *Hing pandukht taghasatsner* [Five Expatriate Songsters], Vienna, 1921).

4. Poghos Khachatrian, *Hai mijnadarian patmakan voghbere, XIV-XVII dd.* [Armenian Medieval Historic Laments, 14-17th cc.] (Yerevan, 1969), p. 265.

5. *Martiros Ghrimetsi* (Kafatsi) was Patriarch of Constantinople 1659-1660, bishop of the prelacy of Crimea, and Patriarch of Jerusalem 1680-1683. The papers left by him include *Patmutiun Ghrima herkri* [History of the Land of Crimea] (1672), regarding the Armenian colony of Crimea; the metricized *Hasmavurk*; odes, hymns, etc. (see *Martiros Ghrimetsi yev ir kervatznere* [Martiros Ghrimetsi and His Poems], study by Mkrtich Poturian, Bucharest, 1924-1930).

6. Georg Brandes, *Hayastane yev Yevropan* [Armenia and Europe] (Geneva, 1905), p. 5.

7. Garegin Srvandztiants, *Manana* [Manna] (Constantinople, 1876), pp. 264-66.

8. *Davit Saladzoretsi* (dates of birth and death unknown, seventeenth century) was born in the Saladzor village of the Karin province and was also called *Vorbik* (orphan). He was a clergyman (see Garegin Srvandztiants, *Hamov-hotov* [Tasty-Fragrant], Constantinople, 1884, pp. 278-85).

9. *Hayots hin yev mijnadarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia* [Anthology of Ancient and Medieval Armenian Poetry], edited by Arshak Madoyian and Garnik Ananian (Yerevan, 1979), p. 560.

10. Artashes Martirosian, *Martiros Ghrimetsi* (Yerevan, 1958), p. 140.

11. Karapet Kostanians, *Nor zhoghovatzu* [New Anthology], folio 1 (Tiflis, 1892), pp. 50-56.

12. *Ibid.*, folio 2, p. 33.

13. See Vazgen Hakobian, "Martiros Yerznkatsu chanaparhordakan notere" [Martiros Yerznkatsi's Travel Notes], *Teghekagir*, no. 6, 1957.

14. Nerses Akinian published Lehotsi's *Travelogue*, with foreword and notes, in the 1932-35 issues of *Handes Amsoria*.

15. See Arshak Alpoyachian, *Hai yepiskoposi me arakelutiune Hapeshistan XVII darun* [The Mission of an Armenian Bishop to Abyssinia in the Seventeenth Century] (Cairo, 1946).

16. Ogostinos Bajetsi's work was first published by Kerovpe Patkanian in an anthology, *Nshkhark matenagrutian hayots* [Fragments of Armenian Letters] (St. Petersburg, 1884).

17. M. Nshanian, *Oragrutium Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchiani* [Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchian's Diary] (Jerusalem, 1939).

18. Yeremia Keomiurchian, *Patmutiun hamarot 400 tarvo Osmantsots tagavoratsn*, edited by Zhozef Avetisian (Yerevan, 1982). Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchian, *Stampolo patmutiun*, edited by Vahram Torgomian (Vienna, 1913).

Notes to Chapter 17

1. Armenian folk songs, which have also been called popular or national songs, have been the subject of scholarly study or published only in the nineteenth to twentieth centuries. Ghevond Alishan was the first who, in 1840, published in *Bazmavep* a series of this type of songs, which were then released under the title *Hayots yergk ramkakank* [Armenian Popular Songs], with adjoining English translations (Venice, 1852). This was followed by the Gamar-Katipa publication *Azgayin yergaran hayots* [The National Song-book of Armenians] (St. Petersburg, 1856), Mikayel Miansariants's *Knar haikakan* [Armenian Lyre] (St. Petersburg, 1868), Aristakes vardapet Tevkants's *Hayerg ...* [Armenian-Song ...] anthology (Tiflis, 1882), Karapet Kostanians's *Nor zhoghovatzu* [New Anthology] (Tiflis, 1892), and the works of Garegin Srvandztiants, Ghevond vardapet Hovnanian, Garegin Hovsepien and others.

In the twentieth century, Manuk Abeghian, with the weighty studies *Zhoghovrdakan khagher* [Folk Airs] (Vagharshapat and Yerevan, 1904 and 1940), *Hin gusanakan zhoghovrdakan yerger* [Ancient Minstrel Folk-Songs]

(Yerevan, 1931), and *Zhoghovrdakan khaghikner* [Folk Tunes] (Yerevan, 1940), Y. Torosian, Garegin Levonian, Arshak Chopanian, Aram Ghanalanian, Asatur Mnatsakanian, and many others have been involved in research of the matter.

The composer Komitas has a considerable legacy in the task of recording tunes of peasant folk songs.

2. Of course, it is not easy to make that differentiation precisely. There have been individual creations where the authors' names have remained unknown, and so these were taken to be popular creations. Or, the contrary, certain folk songs have been considered as individual creations, erroneously being attributed to this or that person.

3. Asatur Mnatsakanian, *Haikakan mijnadarian zhoghovrdakan yerg-er* [Armenian Medieval Folk Songs] (Yerevan, 1956), pp. 252-53.

4. See Shushanik Nazarian, "*Krunk*" *yerge yev nra patmutiune* [The Song "Krunk" and Its Story] (Yerevan, 1977).

5. The oldest copy of "Crane" is kept in the number 85 song-book of the Kiurtian collection (USA), scribed by Hovhannes Yerets in the years 1678-1681, in Constantinople.

6. Mnatsakanian, *Haikakan mijnadarian zhoghovrdakan yerger*, pp. 254-55.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 300-301.

8. Arshak Chopanian, *Hairenneru burastane* (Paris, 1940), pp. 39-40.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

11. Manuk Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1967), p. 128.

12. The first of Kuchak's Armenian poems, as yet unpublished, is titled "Govasanutiun surb Karapetin" (In Praise of St. Karapet), while the second is "Govasank Astvatzatzni" (In Praise of the Mother of God), published in the periodicals *Luma* (1905) and *Anahit* (1907). His Turkish poems written in Armenian orthography were published by Onnik Yeganian (*Banber Matenadarani*, no. 5, 1960, pp. 467-81).

It is surprising that in the series of *hairens* attributed to Kuchak, poems really belonging to him have never been published. This probably was done due to the fact that in language, content, and artistically in general, those works were altogether different from *hairens* placed in anthologies under Kuchak's name, guided by the obvious intention to recognize the latter as their author.

13. Paruir Sevak, *Sayat-Nova* (Yerevan, 1963), p. 138.

14. See manuscript poetry book with unknown title, found in the Yerevan Matenadaran (scriptorium), bearing the number 10208.

15. See Shavigh Grigorian, "Ov e, i verjo, Nahapet Kuchake" [Who, After All, is Nahapet Kuchak?], *Lraber Hasarakakan Gitutiunneri*, no. 7, 1984, pp. 40-41.

16. See Asatur Mnatsakanian, "Mijnadarian siro yergeri norahait andranik zhoghovatzun yev hairenneri hartse" [The New-found Original Anthology of Medieval Love Songs and the Issue of *Hairens*], *Ejer hai zhoghovrdi patmutian yev banasirutian* [Aspects of History and Philology of the Armenian People] (Yerevan, 1971), p. 114.

17. Arshak Chopanian, *Nahapet Kuchaki divane* (Paris, 1902), p. XXXV. Abeghian considers *hairens* with short lines. He divides the fifteen-syllable *hairen* line into seven-eight syllable couplets and forms verses out of them.

18. Arshak Chopanian, *Hairenneru burastane*, p. 224.

19. In Chopanian's opinion, the meter of *hairens* is native Armenian and not copied from the Persian *gazel* or *beyt* (see *Hairenneru burastane*, p. 113).

20. See Chopanian, *Nahapet Kuchaki divane* (Paris, 1902), p. 20.

21. See Abeghian, *Yerker* [Works], vol. 2 (Yerevan, 1967), p. 27.

22. *Hairens* and *antunis* were wide-spread and performed mainly in the region of Akn and for that reason bear the influence of the Akn dialect.

The famous city of Akn was built in 1022, when the Artzrunis, to escape the ravages of Seljuks, emigrated from Vaspurakan with their masses of nobility and commoners and settled in the Sebastia province of Western Armenia, on the right shore of the Euphrates. Later, inhabitants of the city of Ani emigrated here (fourteenth century). In the Middle Ages, and even until the twentieth century Genocide, the city was a place of high intellectual and educational development, which gave birth to famous dynasties of *amiras* (lords) and numerous notable writers and artists of Constantinople (Grigor Zohrap, Arpiar Arpiarian, Misak Metzarents, Arshak Chopanian, Siamanto, Minas Cheraz, Nikol Galanderian, and others).

23. Valeri Bryusov, ed., *Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dnei* (Moscow, 1916), pp. 56-57.

24. The poetic citations are extracted from *A Hundred and One Hayrens*, published under the name of Nahapet Kuchak (Yerevan, 1979).

25. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

30. Nahapet Kuchak, *Haireni kargav* [In the Manner of *Hairens*] (Yerevan, 1957), p. 76.

31. Arshak Chopanian, *Hairenneru burastane*, p. 239.

32. *A Hundred and One Hayrens*, p. 63.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

35. Ibid., p. 49.
36. Ibid., p. 1.
37. Ibid., p. 40.
38. Ibid., p. 43.
39. Nahapet Kuchak, *Haireni kargav*, p. 268.
40. Ibid., p. 256.
41. Ibid., p. 294.
42. Ibid., p. 195.
43. Ibid., p. 39.

Notes to Chapter 18

1. These folk singers laid the foundation of bardic lyricism in Armenian culture. In the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, New Julfa *ashugh*s founded the Iranian-Armenian bardic school (Ghul Arghuni, Egaz, Mkrtich, Bagher oghli Ghazar ...). In the eighteenth century, the Georgian-Armenian bardic school was formed in Tiflis (Shamchi Melkon, Budagh Oghlan, Kichik Nova), whose founder was Sayat-Nova. Artin and Rumani in Constantinople, in the thirties of the eighteenth century, are remarkable figures in Turko-Armenian bardism. More recently, prominent in the Yerevan bardic group is Shirin, founder of the new Armenian national bardic school Ashugh Jivani, and others.

2. Hovhannes Mandakuni, *Jark* [Sermons] (Venice, 1860), p. 134.

3. See Babken Chugasdzian, *Hai-iranakan grakan arnchutiunner* [Armeno-Iranian Literary Relations] (Yerevan, 1963), p. 134.

4. See about him in Arshak Chopanian, *Naghash Hovnatan ashughe yev Hovnatan Hovnatanian nkariche* [Naghash Hovnatan the Bard and Hovnatan Hovnatanian the Painter] (Paris, 1910); Nerses Akinian, *Hovnatan Naghash yev Naghash Hovnataniank yev irents banasteghtzakan yev nkarchakan ashkhatutiunk* [Hovnatan Naghash and the Naghash Hovnatanians and their Poetic and Illustrative Works] (Vienna, 1911); Manik Mkrtchian, *Naghash Hovnatan* (Yerevan, 1957).

5. Mania Ghazarian, *Hai kerparveste XVII-XVIII darerum* [Armenian Figurative Art in the Seventeenth-Eighteenth Centuries] (Yerevan, 1974). Mania Ghazarian, *Khudozhniki Ovnatanyany* [The Hovnatanian Painters] (Moscow, 1968).

6. Naghash Hovnatan, *Tagher* [Songs] (Yerevan, 1983), p. 83.

7. Ibid., p. 85.

8. Ibid., p. 89.

9. Ibid., pp. 26-27.

10. Ibid., p. 14.

11. Ibid., p. 27.

12. Ibid., p. 61.

13. Arshak Chohanian, *Naghash Hovnatan ashughe* ..., p. 13.

14. Sayat-Nova has interested and involved a few generations of scholars. The first was Georg Akhverdian, who published the first edition of his songs, titled *Sayat-Nova* (Moscow, 1852) and which originated the study of Sayat-Nova in Armenian literature. Akhverdian's book, where forty-six poems and research on minstrel art and Sayat-Nova appeared, opened a wide gate for future scholarly studies. After Akhverdian, it was Hovhannes Tumanian who dedicated numerous series of articles and reports to the celebrated Sayat-Nova (*Sayat-Nova, 1912-1917 tt. hodvatzneri, zekutsumneri zhoghovatzu* [Sayat-Nova: 1912-1917, Anthology of Articles and Reports], Yerevan, 1945.) In 1911, Tumanian published the study "Naghash Hovnatan and His, Kuchak Nahapet's and Sayat-Nova's Love," and in 1914, a new collection of Sayat-Nova's songs.

Valeri Bryusov, Ioseb Grishashvili, Nikol Aghbalian (who issued the Georgian songs of the poet), Georgi Leonidze, Levon Melikset-bek, Georg Asatur, Morus Hasratian, Manuk Abeghian, Set Harutiunian, Paruir Sevak, and many others also have contributed to the task of appraisal of the bard-poet and translation of his songs (see Hakob Anasian, "Sayat-Novayi taghere (matenagitakan tesutiun)" [Sayat-Nova's Songs (Bibliographic Survey)] *Sovetakan Grakanutiun*, no. 10, 1963, p. 130).

Ballads, epics, movies, plays, etc. have also been written on Sayat-Nova's life. His songs have been translated into Russian, French, Ukrainian, English, German, Kurdish, Romanian, and other languages.

15. This and subsequent song quotations (indicated by page number after the quotation) are made from the book, *Sayat-Nova, hayeren, vratseren, adrbejaneren khagheri zhoghovatzu* [Sayat-Nova: Collection of Armenian, Georgian, and Azerbaijani Songs], compiled, edited, and annotated by Morus Hasratian (Yerevan, 1963).

16. Ibid., p. XIX.

17. The *mukhammaz* usually consisted of five or more verses, each verse four to eight lines, which have different sections; while the number of syllables would be fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen.

18. Musicologist Mushegh Aghayian and singer Shara Talian have exerted great endeavor in the task of interpreting Sayat-Nova's music and discovering and recording his melodies (see Georg Brutian, "Sayat-Novyan yev yerazhshtutiune" [Sayat-Nova and Music], *Sayat-Nova, gitakan ashkhatutiun-neri zhoghovatzu* [Sayat-Nova: Collection of Scholarly Studies] (Yerevan, 1963), pp. 92-108.

19. Hovhannes Tumanian, *Sayat-Nova* (Yerevan, 1945), pp. 11-12.

20. See Paruir Muradian, "Sayat-Novayi steghtzagortzutian dere vrats grakanutian mej" [The Role of Sayat-Nova's Work in Georgian Literature], *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 3, 1963.

Notes to Chapter 19

1. See Arshak Chopanian, *Hai ejer* [Armenian Papers] (Paris, 1912); Garegin Levonian, "Paghtasar Dpir—kerakan, banasteghtz yev yerazhisht 18-rd darum" [Paghtasar Dpir: Grammarian, Poet, and Musician in the Eighteenth Century], *Teghekagir*, no. 2, 1927.

2. Paghtasar Dpir, *Taghikner siro yev karotanats* [Songlets of Love and Longings] (Yerevan, 1958), p. 68.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

4. See Harutiun Kiurtian, "Antzanot taghachap me" [An Unknown Poet], *Kochnak Hayastani*, no. 25, 1920; Shushanik Nazarian, *Petros Ghapantsi* (Yerevan, 1969).

5. Shushanik Nazarian, *Petros Ghapantsi*, pp. 281-82.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 252.

7. On Stepanos Dashtetsi, see Ashot Abrahamian, *Ejmiatzin*, no. 1, 1947, pp. 46-54; Simon Simonian, *Norahait taghasats me, Stepanos Dashtetsi* [A New-found Balladeer: Stepanos Dashtetsi] (Beirut, 1981).

8. Hrant Asatur, "Mortsvatz banasteghtz me" [A Forgotten Poet], *Arevelian Mamul*, no. 1, 1904, p. 18.

9. Shushanik Nazarian, *Petros Ghapantsi*, pp. 272-73.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

12. In contrast to French theorists, who based their hypotheses on the genre of tragedy, when characterizing the system of classicism in Armenian literature, it is Armenian versification that was accepted as its foundation, since Armenian dramaturgical genres in the eighteenth century signify only the beginning of this literary type at the hands of the school theater established by the Mkhitarists of Venice.

13. Studies were written on the theory of Armenian classicism during the eighteenth century. Khachatur Erzurumetsi (1666-1740) wrote the two-volume *Hamarotakan imastasirutun* [Concise Philosophy] (Venice, 1711), where he explained the main theoretical premises of Armenian classicist poetry; Mkhitar Sebastatsi wrote *Kerakanutiun grabari lezvi haikazian seri* [Grammar of the Grabar Language of the Armenian Race] (Venice, 1730) and the famous *Bargirk haikazian lezvi* [Dictionary of the Armenian Language] (Venice, 1749) studies, expressing his conceptions of different literary styles and language. Stepanos Agonts (1710-1824) is also one of the theorists of classicism in the eighteenth century who, in his tract *Chartasanutiun bovandakial i hing girs* [Rhetoric in Five Books] (Venice, 1775), discusses issues of language and style and different literary genres. In recent times, Marat Tadevosian elucidates issues of Armenian classicist theory in his book *Haikakan klasitsizmi tesutiune* [Survey of Armenian Classicism] (Yerevan, 1977).

Notes to Chapter 20

1. See Leo, *Hayots patmutiun* [History of the Armenians], vol. 3 (Yerevan, 1946), p. 937.

2. Subsequent to proselytizing of the Hellenizing school, as a result of the exploits and various publications of foreign-born Catholic preachers, the Unitores, in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, the Armenian language came under the influence of Latin, and the so-called Latinist Armenian emerged. This was based on *grabar*, Hellenistic Armenian, and Middle Armenian, acquiring the formalistic and conjugational features of Latin. For two centuries, Latinist Armenian continually had a considerably large usage in certain Armenian intellectual areas as a written-literary language and then disappeared without leaving a trace on the Armenian language (see Georg B. Jahukian, *Grabari kerakanutian patmutiun* [History of the Grammar of *Grabar*], Yerevan, 1974, pp. 7-16).

Bibliography

1. THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE, LANGUAGE, AND MYTHOLOGY

- Manandian, H., *Knnakan tesutiun hai zhoghovrdi patmutian*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1944.
- Yeremian, S. T., *Hai zhoghovrdi patmutiun*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1971.
- Yeremian, S. T., "Hai zhoghovrdi kazmavorman entatske," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1970.
- D'yakonov, I. M., "Khetere, priugatsinere yev hayere," *Gitutiunneri Akademiayi Teghekagir*, no. 11, 1956.
- Haikakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran*, vol. 6, Yerevan, 1980, pp. 134-135, 157-159, s.v. "Hayasa," "Hayastan," "Hayer," "Hayeren."
- Garagashian, A. M., *Knnakan patmutiun hayots*, vol. 1-4, Constantinople, 1880-1895.
- Piotrovskiy, B. B., *O proiskhozhdenii armyanskovo naroda*, Yerevan, 1946.
- Ghapantsian, G. A., *Khayasa-kolybel' armyan*, Yerevan, 1947.
- Diakonov, I. M., *The Pre-History of the Armenian People*, trans. by Lori Jennings, with revisions by the author, Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1984.
- Morgan, J., *Histoire du peuple arménien*, Nancy-Paris, 1919.
- Adonts, N., *Histoire d'Arménie, les origines*, Paris, 1946.
- Markwart, J., *Die Entstehung und Wiederherstellung der Armenischen Nation*, Berlin, 1919.
- Acharian, H., *Hayots lezvi patmutiun*, vol. 1-2, Yerevan, 1940-1951.
- Jahukian, G. B., *Hayots lezvi zargatsume yev karutsvatzke*, Yerevan, 1969.
- Ghazarian, S. Gh., *Hayots grakan lezvi patmutiunits*, Yerevan, 1961.
- Aghayan, E., *Grabari kerakanutiun*, vol. 1, book 1, Yerevan, 1964.
- Jahukian, G. B., *Urartskie i indoevropeyskie yazyki*, Yerevan, 1963.
- Hübschmann, H., *Armenische Studien*, Leipzig, 1883.

- Pedersen, H., *Hittitisch und die anderen indoeuropäischen Sprachen*, Copenhagen, 1938.
- Kostanians, K., *Hayots hetanosakan krone*, Vagharshapat, 1879.
- Avdalbegian, T., *Mihre hayots mej*, Vienna, 1929.
- Ghapantsian, G., *Ara Geghetski pashtamunke*, Yerevan, 1944.
- Alishan, Gh., *Hin havatk kam hetanosakan kronk hayots*, Venice, 1895.
- Melik-Pashayan, K. V., *Anahit ditsuhu pashtamunke*, Yerevan, 1963.
- Arakelian, B. N., *Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmutian*, Yerevan, 1976.
- Ranovich, A. B., *Ellenizm i evo istoricheskaya rol'*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950.
- Abeghian, M., *"Vishapner" kochvatz kotoghnern ibrev Astghik-Derketo ditsuhu ardzanner*, Yerevan, 1941.
- Srvandztiants, G., *Grots u brots*, Tiffis, 1910.
- Adonts, N., *Tork astvatz hin hayots*, Vienna, 1911.
- Geltser, H., *Hetazotutiun hai ditsabanutian*, Venice, 1897.
- Alishan, Gh., *Hushikk haireniats hayots*, vol. 1, Venice, 1869.
- Arakelian, A., *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun (I d.m.t.a.-XIV dd.)*, Yerevan, 1959.
- The Mythology of All Races*, vol. 7, New York, 1969.
- Hooke, S. H., *Middle Eastern Mythology*, Baltimore, 1963.
- Karst, J., *Mythologie arméno-caucasienne et hétito-asianique*, Strasbourg-Heitz, 1948.
- Meshchaninov, I. I., "Drevnevansldy bog Khald-Khaldin," *Vostochnye zapiski*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1927.

2. ARMENIAN FOLK LITERATURE

- Hai banahiusutian krestomatia*, Yerevan, 1974.
- Movses Khorenatsi, *Hayots patmutiun*, Yerevan, 1940.
- Abeghian, M., *Hai zhoghovrdakan araspelnere Movses Khorenatsu Hayots patmutian mej*, Vagharshapat, 1899.
- Emin, M., *Vepk hnuin Hayastani*, Moscow, 1850.
- Emin, M., *Movses Khorenatsin yev hayots hin vepere*, Tiflis, 1886.
- Ghanalanian, A., *Zhoghovrdakan banahiusutian mi kani hartser*, Yerevan, 1954.
- Palasanian, S., *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian*, vol. 1, Tiflis, 1885.

- Srvandztiants, G., *Grots u brots yev Sasuntsi Davit kam Mheri dur*, Constantinople, 1874.
- Grigorian, G., *Hai zhoghovrdakan banahiusutiun*, Yerevan, 1980.
- Grigorian, G., *Hai zhoghovrdakan vipergere yev patmakan yergayin banahiusutiune*, vol. 1-2, Yerevan, 1972, 1981.
- Grigorian, Sh., *Hayots hin gusanakan yergere*, Yerevan, 1971.
- Harutiunian, S., *Anetzki yev orhnanki zhanre hai banahiusutian mej*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Khalatians, B., *Irani herosnere hai zhoghovrdi mej*, Paris, 1901.
- Khalatians, G., *Armyanskiy epos v istorii Armenii Moiseya Khorenskogo*, Moscow, 1896.
- Basset, R., "Les anciens chants historiques et les traditions populaires de l'Arménie," *Revue des Traditions Populaires*, vol. 2, 1896.

3. CREATION OF THE ARMENIAN ALPHABET: MESROP MASHTOTS

- Aghayan, E. B., *Nakhamashtotsian hai gri u grakanutian, Mesropian aibubeni yev harakits hartseri masin*, Yerevan, 1977.
- Abrahamian, A. G., *Nakhamashtotsian hai gir yev grchutiun*, Yerevan, 1982.
- Ghafadarian, K., *Mijnadarian hushardzanner yev vimakan ardzanagru-tiunner*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Acharian, H., *Hayots lezvi patmutiun*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1940.
- Acharian, H., *Hayots grere*, Vienna, 1928.
- Acharian, H., *Mesrobi yev greru giuti patrnutian aghbiurnern u anonts knnutiune*, Paris, 1907.
- Koriun, *Vark Mashtotsi*, Yerevan, 1962.
- Adonts, N., *Mashtots yev nra ashakertnere, est otar aghbiurneri*, Vienna, 1925.
- Akinian, N., *S. Mashtots vardapet, kiankn u gortzuneutiune*, Vienna, 1949.
- Leo, *Mesrop Mashtots*, Yerevan, 1963.
- Taghavarian, N., *Tzagumn hai tarits*, Vienna, 1896.
- Malkhasian, S., "Hayots gire," *Taraz*, no. 5, 1892.
- Martirosian, A., *Mashtots (Patma-knnakan tesutiun)*, Yerevan, 1982.
- Mesrop Mashtots, hodvatznerni zhoghovatzu*, Yerevan, 1962.

- Markwart, J., *Patmutiun hayeren nshanagruru yev varuts S. Mashtotsi*, trans. by A. Vardanian, Vienna, 1913.
- Tashian, H., *Aknark me hai hnagrutian vra*, Vienna, 1898.
- Ormanian, M., *Azgapatum*, Pt. 1, Constantinople, 1912.
- Papazian, H., "Mesropatar ailalezu grakanutian masin," *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 7, 1964.
- Gaterchian, H., *Patmutiun matenagrutian hayots*, vol. 1, Vienna, 1851.
- Arakelian, A., *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsmian patmutiun (I d.m.t.a. - XIV dd.)*, Yerevan, 1959.
- Mar, N., *Mkrtutiun hayots, vrats, abkhazats yev alanats i dzern srbuin Grigori Lusavorchi*, St. Petersburg, 1904.
- Galemkarian, G., *Voskedarian yev voch-voskedarian hayereni khndire*, Constantinople, 1903.
- Shnitser, Ya. B., *Illyustrirovannaya vseobshchaya istoriya pis'men*, St. Petersburg, 1903.
- Emin, N. O., *Issledovanie i stat'i*, Moscow, 1896.
- Peeters, P., "Pour l'histoire des origines de l'alphabet arménien," *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, vol. 9, 1929.
- Müller, F., *Über den Ursprung der armenischen Schrift*, Vienna, 1865.

4. THE HELLENIZING SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

- Manandian, H., *Hunaban dprotse yev nra zargatsman shrjannere*, Vienna, 1928.
- Zarbhanalian, G., *Matenadaran haikakan targmanutians nakhniats (dar IV-XIII)*, Venice, 1889.
- Zarbhanalian, G., *Patmutiun hayeren dprutians*, Venice, 1886.
- Gaterchian, H., *Patmutiun matenagrutian hayots*, vol. 1, Vienna, 1851.
- Anasian, H. S., *Astvatashunch matiani haikakan bnagire (matenagitutium)*, Yerevan, 1976.
- Anasian, H. S., "Astvatzabanakan yev davanabanakan grakanutiun," *Haikakan matenagitutium, V-XVIII dd.*, vol. 2, Yerevan, 1976, pp. 216-308.
- Melkonian, H., "Astvatzashnchi asoreren yev hayeren targmanutiunneri patmutiunits," *Ejmiatzin*, no. 11-12, 1966.

- Astuatsashunch' Matean Hin ew Nor Ktakaransts'* [Scriptures of the Old and New Testament], ed. Hovhannes Zohrapian, Venice, 1805. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1984. Introduction by Claude E. Cox.
- Melkonian, H. *Hai-Asorakan haraberutiunneri patmutiunits*, Yerevan, 1970.
- Galemkian, G., *Voskedarian yev voch-voskedarian hayereni khndire*, Constantinople, 1903.
- Ter-Movsesyan, M., *Istoriya perevoda Biblii na armyanskiy yazyk*, St. Petersburg, 1902.
- Adonts, N., "La Bible arménienne et sa portée historique," Célébration solennelle du quinzième centenaire de la traduction arménienne de la Bible, Paris, 1938.
- Adonts, N., *Dionisiy Frakiyskiy i armyanskie tolkovateli*, St. Petersburg, 1915.
- Jahukian, G., *Kerakanakan yev ughghagrakan ashkhatutiunnere hin yev mijnadarian Hayastanum*, Yerevan, 1954.
- Chaloyan, V. K., *Hayots pilisopayutian patmutiun*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Avgerian, M., *Liakatar vark yev vkayabanutiun srbots*, vol. 1-10, Venice, 1810-1815.
- Avdalbegian, M., *Hai gegharvestakan ardzaki skzbnavorume*, Yerevan, 1971.
- Arakelian, V., *Hingerord darl hai targmanakan grakanutian lezun yev voche*, Yerevan, 1983.
- Ter-Davtian, K., *XI-XV dd. hai varkagrutiune*, Yerevan, 1980.
- Soperk haikakank*, vol. 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13, Venice, 1853-1854.
- Vipper, R. Yu., *Vozniknovenie khristianskoy literatury*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1946.
- Ter-Minasian, Y., *Endhanur yekeghetsakan patmutiun*, vol. 1, Ejmiatzin, 1908.
- Knik havato*, Ejmiatzin, 1914.
- Girk tghtots*, Tiflis, 1901.
- Peeters, P., *Recherches d'histoire et de philologie orientales*, Brussels, 1951.
- Mécérian, J., "Introduction à l'étude des Synaxaires arméniennes," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph*, vol. 30, fasc. 4., *Bulletin Arménologique*, pp. 99-188.
- Altaner, B., *Patrology*, London, 1960.

**5. ARMENIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY
IN THE FIFTH CENTURY:
BEGINNING AND ZENITH OF THE CLASSICAL PERIOD**

- Gaterchian, H., *Patmutiun matenagrutian hayots*, vol. 1, Vienna, 1851.
- Garagashian, A. M., *Knnakan patmutiun hayots*, vol. 1-4, Constantinople, 1880-1895.
- Akinian, N., *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner*, vol. 2, Vienna, 1924.
- Alishan, Gh., *Hayapatum*, Venice, 1901.
- Zaminian, A., *Patmutiun hayots hin grakanutian*, Beirut, 1941.
- Zarbhanalian, G., *Patmutiun hayeren dprutians*, Venice, 1886.
- Papazian, V., *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian*, Tiflis, 1910.
- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1968.
- Durian, Y., *Patmutiun hai matenagrutian*, Jerusalem, 1933.
- Sarkissian, K., *A Brief Introduction to Armenian Christian Literature*, London, 1960.
- Mkrian, M., *Hai hin grakanutian patmutiun (5-10rd darer)*, Yerevan, 1976.
- Mkrtchian, A., *Hingerord dari hai dprutiun*, Yerevan, 1968.
- Bedikian, A. F., *The Golden Age in the Fifth Century: An introduction to Armenian Literature in Perspective*, New York, 1963.
- Tamrazian, H., *Hai kknadatutiun, grakan mtki akunknere yev dzevavorumne, 5-rd dar, bk. 1*, Yerevan, 1983.
- Ter-Minasian, Y., *Patmabanasirakan hetazotutiunner*, Yerevan, 1971.
- Langlois, V., *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie*, Paris, 1867.

KORIUN

- Biuzandatsi, N., *Koriun vardapet yev norin targmanutiunk*, Tiflis, 1900.
- Koriun, *Vark Mashtotsi*, trans., intro., and commentary by M. Abeghian, Yerevan, 1941.
- Koriun, *Vark Mashtotsi*, critical text, Introduction and commentary by N. Akinian, *Handes Amsoria*, 1949, pp. 171-320.
- Acharian, H., *Hayots grere*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1968.
- Koriwn, *The Life of Mashtots*, trans. by Bedros Norehad, New York, 1964.

- Koriwn, *Vark Mashtots'i* [The life of Mashtots], ed. Manuk Abeghian, Yerevan, 1941. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1985. Introduction by Krikor H. Maksoudian.
- Coriun's Lebensbeschreibung des hl. Mesrop*. Aus dem armenischen Urtexte zum ersten Male übersetzt und aus armenischen Schriftstellern erläutert von Dr. B. Welte, Tübingen, 1841.

AGATANGEGHOS

- Agatangeghos, *Patmutiun hayots*, translation, introduction, and commentary by A. Ter-Ghevondian, Yerevan, 1977.
- Tashian, H., *Agatangeghos ar Georga asori yepiskoposin yev usumnasirutiun Agatangeghia grots*, Vienna, 1891.
- Sargisian, B., *Agatangeghos yev iur bazmadarian gaghnikn*, Venice, 1890.
- Akinian, N., "Agatangeghosi hayots dardzi patmutiune mijazgayin grakanutian mej," *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner*, vol. 5, Vienna, 1953.
- Melik-Ohanjanian, K., "Agatangeghosi patmutiunn u nra zhoghovrdakan banavor skzbnaghbiurnere," *Mare yev hayagitutian hartsere* (zhoghovatzu), Yerevan, 1968.
- Ter-Ghevondian, A., *Agatangeghosi arabakan nor khmbagrutiune*, Yerevan, 1968.
- Anasian, H. S., "Agatangeghos," *Haikakan matenagitutiun*, V-XVIII dd., vol. 1, Yerevan, 1959, pp. 151-213.
- La version grecque ancienne du livre arménien d'Agathange*, edition critique par Guy Lafontaine, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1973.
- Garitte, G., *Documents pour l'étude du livre d'Agathange*, Vatican, 1946.
- Gutschmidt, A., "Agathangelos," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Bd. 31, 1877.
- Mar, N., *Kreshchenie Armyan, Gruzin, Abkhazov i Alanov svyatym Grigoriem (arabskaya versiya)*, St. Petersburg, 1905 (Armenian ed., Vagharshapat, 1911).
- Agat'angeghos, *History of the Armenians*, trans. and commentary by R. W. Thomson, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976.

Agat'angeghos, *Patmut'iwn Hayots'* [History of the Armenians], ed. Kalouste Ter Mkrtichian and Stepan Kanayan, Tiflis, 1909. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1980. Introduction by Robert W. Thomson.

PAVSTOS BUZAND

Pavstos Buzand, *Patmutiun hayots*, trans., intro., and commentary by S. Malkhasiants, Yerevan, 1947.

Malkhasiants, S., "Usumnasirutiun Pavstos Buzandi Patmutian," *Handes Amsoria*, no. 2-4, 1896.

Daghbashian, H., "Pavstos Buzandatsi yev iur patmutian khardakhoghe," *Handes Amsoria*, nos. 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 1897; nos. 1, 2, 6, 7, 1898.

Ter-Poghosian, G., *Nkatoghutiunner Pavstosi Patmutian veraberial*, Vienna, pt. 1, 1901; pt. 2, 1919.

Faustus de Buzance, *Bibliothèque historique en quatre livres*, trans. by I. B. Emine, *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie*, ed. V. Langlois, vol. 1, Paris, 1867.

Des Faustus von Byzanz Geschichte Armeniens, übersetzt und mit einer Abhandlung über die Geographie Armeniens eigeleitet von Dr. M. Lauer, Köln, 1879.

Safarian, V., *Pavstos Buzandi "Hayots Patmutian" temanere hai nor grakanutian mej*, Yerevan, 1979.

Epic Histories: Buzandaran Patmutiunk, translation and commentary by Nina G. Garsoïan, Cambridge MA, 1989.

Patmut'iwn Hayots', *Buzandaran Patmut'iwnk'* [The epic histories], also known as, *Patmut'iwn hayoc'* [History of Armenia], attributed to P'awstos Buzandac'i, St. Petersburg, 1883. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1984. Introduction by Nina G. Garsoïan.

GHAZAR PARPETSİ

Khalatians, G., *Ghazar Parpetsi yev gortzk norin*, Moscow, 1883.

- Ghazar Parpetsvo *Patmutiun hayots yev Tught*, prep. by G. Ter-Mkrtchian and S. Malkhasiants, Tiflis, 1904.
- Ghazar Parpetsi, *Hayots patmutiune yev Vahan Mamikonianin gratz tughte*, trans. by M. Ter-Petrosiants, Aleksandropol, 1895.
- Lazare de Pharbe, *Histoire d'Arménie*, trad. pour la première fois en français et acc. de notes historiques et critiques, by P. Samuel Dr. Ghésarian, ed. V. Langlois, *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie*, vol. 2, Paris, 1869.
- Ghazar Parpetsi, *Patmut'iwn Hayots'* [History of the Armenians] and *T'ught' ar Vahan Mamikonean* [Letter to Vahan Mamikonian]. Tiflis, 1904. Rpt. Delmar, 1986. Introduction by Dickran Kouymjian.

YEGHISHE

- Yeghishe, *Vardanants patmutiune*, trans., intro, research and notes by Y. Ter-Minasian, Yerevan, 1946.
- Akinian, N., *Yeghishe vardapet yev iur patmutiun hayots paterazmin*, matenagrakan-patmakan usumnasirutun, Vienna, vol. 1, 1932; vol. 2, 1936.
- Khalatians, G., "Yeghishei aghbiurneri artiv," *Handes Amsoria*, no. 4, 1895.
- Ter-Poghosian, G., "Nkatoghutiunner Yeghishei Patmutian veraberial," *Handes Amsoria*, nos. 5-7, 10, 1896.
- Kiuleserian, B., *Yeghishe*, knnakan usumnasirutun, Vienna, 1909.
- Soperk haikakank*, vol. 11, Venice, 1854.
- Elisée Vardaped, *Histoire de Vardan et de la guerre des Arméniens*, trad. nouvelle, acc. de notes historiques et critiques, by V. Langlois, *Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie*, vol. 2, Paris, 1869.
- Elishê, *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*, trans. and commentary by R. W. Thomson, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Eghishê, *Vasn Vardanay ew Hayots' Paterazmin* [The History of Vardan and the Armenian War], ed. Yervant Ter-Minasian, Yerevan, 1957. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1993. Introduction by Robert W. Thomson.

MOVSES KHORENATSI

- Movses Khorenatsvo Patmutiun hayots*, prep. by M. Abeghian and S. Harutiunian, Tiflis, 1913.
- Movses Khorenatsi, *Hayots patmutiun*, trans., intro., and commentary by S. Malkhasiants, Yerevan, 1968.
- Matenagrutiunk Movses Khorenatsvo*, Venice, 1865.
- Malkhasiants, S., *Khorenatsu areghtzvatzi shurje*, Yerevan, 1940.
- Armen, H. K., *Patmutiun Khorenatsii knnadatutian*, Jerusalem, 1954.
- Sargsian, G., *Hellenistakan darashrjani Hayastane yev Movses Khorenatsin*, Yerevan, 1966.
- Khalatians, G., *Armyanskiy epos v istorii Armenii Moiseya Khorenskogo*, Moscow, 1896.
- Conybeare, F. C., "Movses Khorenatsu zhamanaki masin," *Handes Amsoria*, nos. 1, 3, 1902.
- Arakelian, V., "Khorenatsu lezun yev voche," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1975.
- Emin, M., *Movses Khorenatsin yev hayots hin vepere*, Tiflis, 1886.
- Emin, M., *Vepk hnuin Hayastani*, Moscow, 1850.
- Moses, of Khoren, *Patmut 'iwn Hayots'* [History of the Armenians], ed. Manuk Abeghian and Set Harutunian, Tiflis, 1913. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1981. Introduction by Robert W. Thomson.
- Moses Khorenats'i, *History of the Armenians*, trans. and commentary on the literary sources by R. W. Thomson, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Carrière, A., *Nouvelles sources de Moïse de Khoren*, Vienna, 1893.
- Gutschmid, A., *Über die Glaubwürdigkeit der Armenischen Geschichte des Moses von Khoren*, Leipzig, 1876.

6. HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE POST-CLASSICAL PERIOD: FIFTH TO EIGHTH CENTURIES

- Adonts, N., *Armeniya v epokhu Yustinyana*, St. Petersburg, 1908.
- Alishan, Gh., *Hayapatum*, Venice, 1901.
- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1968.
- Patmutiun Sebeosi*, prep. by G. Abgarian, Yerevan, 1979.

- Malkhasiants, S., *Sebeosi Patmutiune yev Movses Khorenatsi*, Tiflis, 1899.
- Ananian, P., *Sebeosi Patmutian grki masin kani me lusabanutiunner*, Venice, 1972.
- Abgarian, G., *Sebeosi Patmutiune yev Ananuni areghtzvatze*, Yerevan, 1965.
- Histoire d'Heraclius, par l'évêque Sébéos*, trans. by Fr. Macler, Paris, 1904.
- Movses Kaghankatvatsi, *Patmutiun Aghvanits ashkharhi*, critical text and intro. by V. Arakelian, Yerevan, 1983.
- Akinian, N., *Movses Daskhurantsi kochvatz Kaghankatvatsi yev ir Patmutiun Aghvanits*, Vienna, 1970.
- Mnatsakanian, A., *Aghvanits ashkharhi grakanutian hartseri shurje*, Yerevan, 1966.
- Svazian, H., "Movses Kaghankatvatsu Aghvanits ashkharhi patmutian aghbiurnere," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 3, 1972.
- Patmutiun Taroni*, Yerevan, 1941.
- Khalatiants, G., *Zenob Glak*, hamematakan usumnasirutun, Vienna, 1893.
- Ghevond, *Patmutiun*, trans., intro., and commentary by A. Ter-Ghevondian, Yerevan, 1982.
- Akinian, N., *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner, Ghevond yerets patmagir*, vol. 3, Vienna, 1930.
- Histoire des guerres et des conquêtes des Arabes en Arménie*, par l'éminent Ghevond, trad. par G. Chahnazarian, Paris, 1856.
- Yeznik Koghbatsi, *Yeghtz aghandots*, trans. by A. Abrahamian, Yerevan, 1970.
- Adonts, N., "Knnakan nshumner Yezniki masin," *Bazmavep*, nos. 7, 10, 12, 1925; no. 4, 1926.
- Galemkarian, G., *Noraguin aghberk Yeznka Koghbatsvo enddem aghandots matenin*, Vienna, 1919.
- Gabrielian, H., *Hai pilisopayakan mtki patmutiun*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1956.
- Gelzer, H., "Eznik und die Entwiellung der persischen Religions-systems," *Zeitschrift für armenische Philologie*, Bd. 1, 1902.
- Mariés, L., "Le de Deo d'Eznik de Kolb connu sous le nom de 'Contre les sectes': Etudes de Critique Litteraire et Textuelle," *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, vol. 4, fasc. 2, 1924; vol. 5, fasc. 1, 1925.

- Davit Anhaght, *Yerkasirutiunk pilisopayakank*, collated critical texts and intro. by S. Arevshatian, Yerevan, 1980.
- Anania Shirakatsi, *Matenagrutiun*, trans., foreword, and commentary by A. Abrahamian and G. Petrosian, Yerevan, 1979.
- Anania Shirakatsi, *Ashkharhatsoyts* [Geography], Venice, 1881, and Yerevan, 1947. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1994. Introduction by Robert H. Hewsen.
- Anasian, H. S., "Anania Shirakatsi," *Haikakan matenagitutiun*, V-XVIII dd., vol. 1, Yerevan, 1959, pp. 731-774.
- Kharanis, P., *Hayere biuzandakan kaisrutian mej*, trans. by H. Perperian, Vienna, 1966.

7. SACRED MUSIC: SHARAKANS

- Avetikian, G., *Batsatrutiun sharakanats*, Venice, 1814.
- Andzevatsi, Kh., *Meknutiun aghotits pataragin*, Venice, 1869.
- Gaterchian, H., *Srbazan pataragamatuitsk Hayots ...*, Vienna, 1897.
- Soperk haikakank*, vol. 11, 12, 14, 15, Venice, 1859-1862.
- Saghmos*, Ejmiatzin, 1862.
- Alishan, Gh., *Shnorhali yev paraga iur*, Venice, 1873.
- Khachkonts, D., *Hayots kronakan banasteghtzutiune*, Tiflis, 1904.
- Amatuni, S., *Hin yev nor parakanon kam anvaver sharakanner*, Vagharshapat, 1911.
- Hakobian, G., *Sharakanneri zhanre hai mijnadarian grakanutian mej* (V-XV dd.), Yerevan, 1980.
- Ormanian, M., *Azgapatum*, Pt. 1, Constantinople, 1912.
- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1968.
- Abeghian, M., "Endhanur tesutiun hayots hin banasteghtzutian," *Yerker*, vol. 5, Yerevan, 1975.
- Akinian, N., *S. Mashtots vardapet, kiankn u gortzuneutiune*, Vienna, 1949.
- Sasnetsi, K., *Nerboghian haghags varuts yev mahvan S. vardapetin Mesroba*, Vagharshapat, 1897.
- Mesrop Mashtots, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu*, Yerevan, 1962.
- Melikian, S., *Hunakan azdetsutiune hai yerazhshtutian tesakani vra*, Tiflis, 1914.

- Chanashian, M., *S. Nerses Shnorhalii sharakannere* (grakan usumnasirutiun), Venice, 1975.
- Nerses Shnorhali, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu*, Yerevan, 1977.
- Tahmizian, N., *Nerses Shnorhalin yergahan yev yerazhisht*, Yerevan, 1973.
- Sharakan hogevor yergots*, Jerusalem, 1936.
- Komitas, *Hodvatzner yev usumnasirutiunner*, Yerevan, 1941.
- Atayan, R., *Haikakan khazayin notagrutiun*, Yerevan, 1959.
- Tahmizian, N., "Knnakan tesutian hayots hin yev mijnadarian yerazhshtutian patmutian," *Lraber Hasarakakan Gitutiunneri*, no. 1, 1971.
- Tahmizian, N., "Khachatur Taronatsi yev hayots pataragi nakherge," *Ejmiatzin*, no. 11, 1975.
- Sharakan, bogosluzhebnye kanony i pesni armyanskoy vostochnoy tserkvi*, per. s drevnearmyanskovo M. Emina, Moskva, 1914.
- Nève, F., *L'Arménie chrétienne et sa littérature*, Louvain, 1886.
- Ter-Mikaëlian, N., *Das Arménische Hymnarium*, Leipzig, 1905.
- Conybeare, F. C., *Rituale Armenorum*, Oxford, 1905.
- Hanssens, I. M., *Institutiones Liturgicae De Ritibus Orientalibus*, vol. 2 and 3, Rome, 1930, 1932.
- Salaville, S., *An Introduction to the Study of Eastern Liturgies*, adapted from the French by J. M. T. Barton, London, 1938.

8. ARMENIAN LITERATURE IN THE TENTH TO FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vols. 3 and 4, Yerevan, 1968, 1970.
- Ter-Minasian, G. Y., *Mijnadarian aghandneri tzagman yev zargatsman patmutiunits*, Yerevan, 1968.
- Melik-Bakhshian, S., *Pavlikian sharzhume Hayastanum*, Yerevan, 1953.
- Ormanian, M., *Azgapatum*, Pt. 1, Constantinople, 1912.
- Malkhasiants, S., *Matenagitakan ditoghutiunner*, Yerevan, 1961.
- Aristakes Lastivertsi, *Patmutiun*, trans. by V. Georgian, Yerevan, 1971.
- Manukian, G., *Aristakes Lastivertsi, matenagrutian banasirakan knnutiun*, Yerevan, 1977.

- Arisdagues de Lasdiverd, *Histoire d'Arménie, comprenant la fin du royaume d'Ani et la commencement de l'invasion des Seldjoukides*, trans. by M. E. Prud'homme, Paris, 1864. —
- Grigor Magistros, *Tghter*, intro. and commentary by K. Kostanians, Aleksandropol, 1910.
- Taghasatsutiunk Grigori Magistrosi Pahlavunvo*, Aleksandropol, 1910.
- Hovhannes Katoghikosi Draskhanakerttsvo patmutiun hayots*, Constantinople, 1852.
- Histoire d'Arménie, par le patriarche Jean IV, dit Jean Catholikos*, trans. by A. J. Saint-Martin, Paris, 1841.
- Thomas Artsruni, *Patmut'iwñ Tann Artsruneats'* [History of the House of Artsrunik'], St. Petersburg, 1887. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1991. Introduction by Robert W. Thomson.
- Tovma Artzruni, *Patmutiun tann Artzruniats*, Constantinople, 1852.
- Biuzandatsi, N., "Tovma Artzruni yev Ananun Artzruni yerku ailevail patmagirk en," *Bazmavep*, nos. 5-10, 1905.
- "Histoire des Ardzrouni, par le Vartabed Thoma Ardzrouni," trans. by M. Brosset, vol. 1, St. Petersburg, 1874.
- Patmutiun Matteosi Urhayetsvo*, Jerusalem, 1869.
- Acharian, H., "Matteos Urhayetsi," *Handes Amsoria*, nos. 7-9, 1953.
- Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *Patmutiun hayots*, prep. by K. Melik-Ohanjanian, Yerevan, 1961.
- Arakelian, V. D., "Kirakos Gandzaketsi," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1972.
- "Histoire d'Arménie par le Vartabed Kiracos de Gantzac," *Deux historiens arméniens*, trans. by M. Brosset, vol. 1, St. Petersburg, 1870.
- Abrahamian, A. G., *Hovhannes Imastaseri matenagrutiune*, Yerevan, 1956.
- Alishan, Gh., "Sarkavag Sopestes," *Hushikk haireniats hayots*, vol. 2, Venice, 1870.
- Vardan, Arewelts'i, *Hawakumn Patmut'ean* [Chronicle], Venice, 1862. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1991. Introduction by Robert W. Thomson.
- Grigorian, G., "Hovhannes Imastaseri pilisopayakan hayatsknere," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 3, 1958.
- Voskian, H., "Hovhannes Sarkavagi kianke," *Handes Amsoria*, nos. 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 1925.

- Voskian, H., *Hovhannes Vanakan yev iur dprotse*, Vienna, 1922.
 Hovhannisian, H., *Tatrone mijnadarian Hayastanum*, Yerevan, 1978.
 Hovhannes Draskhananertsi, *Patmut'iwn Hayots'* [History of the Armenians], Tiflis, 1912. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1979. Introduction by Krikor H. Maksoudian.

9. GRIGOR NAREKATSI

- Srbuin horn mero Grigoti Nareka vanits vanakani matenagrutiunk*, Venice, 1840.
Narek, aghotamatian S. Grigori Narekatsvo, Modern Armenian trans. by Torgom yepiskopos, Cairo, 1926.
 Grigor Narekatsi, *Matian voghbergutian, Tagher*, trans. by V. Georgian, Yerevan, 1979.
 Grigor Narekatsi, *Matian voghbergutian*, prep. by P. M. Khachatrian and A. A. Ghazinian, Yerevan 1985.
 Grigor Narekatsi, *Tagher yev gandzer*, prep. by A. Keoshkerian, Yerevan, 1981.
 Mkrian, M., *Grigor Narekatsi*, Yerevan, 1955.
 Arakelian, V., *Grigor Narekatsu lezun yev voche*, Yerevan, 1975.
 Yeghivard, *Nareke hai grakanutian mej*, Jerusalem, 1947.
 Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1968.
 Chopanian, A., *Demker*, Paris, 1924.
 Tahmizian, N., "Komitase yev Narekatsu taghere," *Banber Yerevani hamalsarani*, no. 3, 1969.
 Tchobanian, A., "La literature arménienne; Grégoire de Narek," *Mercure de France*, vol. 36, no. 131, 1900.
 "Grégoire de Narek," *Cahiers du Sud*, 1954.
 Karst, J., "Nareg ou Naregatsi," *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique*, vol. 11, col. 24-26.
 Grégoire de Narek, *Le livre de prières*, trans. from the Armenian by Is. Kéchichian, preface by J. Mécérian, Paris, 1961.
 Marcel, L.-A., *Grégoire de Narek et l'ancienne poésie arménienne*, Paris, 1953.
 Grigor Narekatsi, *Kniga skorbi*, trans. by N. Grebneva, Yerevan, 1977.
Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dney, ed., intro., and commentary by V. Bryusov, Moscow, 1916.

- Grigor Narekatsi, *Lamentations of Narek: Mystic Soliloquies with God*, trans. by M. Kudian, London, 1971.
- Gregory, Narekatsi, *Matean Oghberkut'ean* [The Book of Lamentations], Buenos Aires, 1948. Rpt. Delmar NY: Caravan Books, 1981. Introduction by James R. Russell.

10. NERSES SHNORHALI

- Nerses Shnorhali, *Bank chapav*, Venice, 1830.
- Nerses Shnorhali, *Voghb Yedesio*, Yerevan, 1973.
- Nerses Shnorhali, *Vipasanutiun*, text, commentary, and intro. by M. Mkrtchian, Yerevan, 1981.
- Nerses Shnorhali*, Yerevan, 1968.
- Alishan, Gh., *Shnorhali yev paraga iur*, Venice, 1873.
- Alishan, Gh., *Hayapatum*, Venice, 1901.
- Alishan, Gh., *Sisvan*, Venice, 1885.
- Srbuin Nersesi Shnorhalvo Patmutiun varuts*, Venice, 1854.
- Hakobian, G., *Nerses Shnorhali*, Yerevan, 1964.
- Nerses Shnorhali, hodvatzneri zhoghovatzu*, Yerevan, 1977.
- Tahmizian, N., *Nerses Shnorhalin yergahan yev yerazhisht*, Yerevan, 1973.
- Mnatsakanian, A., *Hai mijnadarian hanelukner*, Yerevan, 1980.
- Ormanian, M., *Azgapatum*, Pt. 1, Constantinople, 1912.
- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 4, Yerevan, 1970.
- Zarbhanalian, G., *Patmutiun hayeren dprutians*, Venice, 1886.
- Mkrian, M., *Grigor Narekatsi*, Yerevan, 1955.
- Arakelian, A., *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun, (1 d.m.t.a. - 14 d.)*, Yerevan, 1959.
- Mkrtchian A., *Niuter X-XVIII dareri hai grakanutian patmutian hamar*, Yerevan, 1945, folio 1, "Nerses Shnorhali."
- Chanashian, M., *S. Nerses Shnorhalii sharakannere (grakan usumnasi-rutiun)*, Venice, 1975.

11. THE ARMENIAN FOLK EPIC: DAVID OF SASUN

- Srvandztiants, G., *Grots u brots yev Sasuntsi Davit kam Mheri dur*, Constantinople, 1874.
- Abeghian, M., *Davit yev Mher, zhoghovrdakan diutsaznakan vep*, Shushi, 1889.
- Abeghian, M., *Hai zhoghovrdakan vepe*, Tiflis, 1908.
- Sasna Tzrer*, prep. by M. Abeghian and K. Melik-Ohanjanian, vol. 1-3, Yerevan, 1936, 1944-1951.
- Sasuntsi Davit, haikakan zhoghovrdakan epos*, compiled by M. Abeghian, G. Abov, and A. Ghanalanian, Yerevan, 1939.
- Sasuntsi Davit, hai zhoghovrdakan herosavep*, Introduction, glossary, and commentary by S. Harutiunian, Yerevan, 1981.
- Grakan-banasirakan hetakhuzumner*, Yerevan, 1946, pp. 269-327.
- Orbeli, H., *Haikakan herosakan epose*, Yerevan, 1956.
- Grigorian, G., *Hai zhoghovrdakan herosakan epose*, Yerevan, 1960.
- Hakobian, H. K., "Sasna Tzrer eposi yergitzakan makanunnere," *Banber Yerevani hamalsarani*, no. 3, 1976.
- Sahakian, A., *Sasna Tzreri patwumneri knnakan hamematutiun*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Der Melkonian-Minassian, Ch., *L'épopée populaire Arménienne David de Sassoun: Étude critique*, Montréal, 1972.
- Harutiunian, S. *Sasna Tzrer*, Yerevan, 1977.
- Surmelian, L. *Daredevils of Sassoun*, London, 1966.
- Kudian, M., *The Saga of Sassoun*, London, 1970.

12. MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN PROSE

- Ejer hai mijnadarian gegharvestakan ardzakits*, ed. and intro. by K. Melik-Ohanjanian, Yerevan, 1957.
- Srapian, A., *Hai mijnadatian zruitsner*, Yerevan, 1969.
- Soperk haikakank*, vol. 12, Venice, 1854.
- Vark yev vkayabanutiunk srbots, hatentir kaghialk i charentrats*, vol. 2, Venice, 1874.
- Hayots nor vkanere (1155-1843)*, prep. by H. Manandian and H. Acharian, Vagharshapat, 1903.

- Ter-Davtian, K., *XI-XV dd. hai varkagrutiune*, Yerevan, 1980.
- Khachikian, L., *XIV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner*, Yerevan, 1950.
- Hakobian, V., *Hayeren dzeragreri XVII dari hishatakarannere*, vol. 1-2, Yerevan, 1974-1978.
- Anasian, H. S., "Arakagrutiun yev arakner," *Haikakan matenagitutiun*, V-XVIII dd., vol. 1, Yerevan, 1959, pp. 1060-1087.
- Hovnanian, Gh., *Hetazotutiunk nakhniats ramikoreni vra*, Vienna, 1897.
- Emin, M., *Vepk hnuin Hayastani*, Moscow, 1850.
- Haikuni, S., *Kendanakan veper, zhoghovrdakan arakner*, bk. 1, Vagharshapat, 1907.
- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 4, Yerevan, 1970.
- Arakk Mkhitar Goshi*, Venice, 1854.
- Mkhitar Gosh, Vardan Aigektsi, *Arakner*, Yerevan, 1951.
- Mkhitar Gosh, *Girk Datastani*, prep. by Kh. Torosian, Yerevan, 1975.
- Pivazian, E., "Mkhitar Gosh," *Hai nuhakuiti nshanavor gortzichnere*, V-XVIII darer, Yerevan, 1976, pp. 266-282.
- Tashian, H., "Zhoghovatzuik arakats Vardana," *Niuter patmutian hayots mijnadarian matenagrutian*, Vienna, 1900.
- Mar, N., *Sborniki pritch Vardana*, vol. 1, Issledovanie, St. Petersburg, 1899.
- Hatentir arakk Vardana vardapetin, Choix de fables de Vartan, en arménien et en français*, prep. by A. Saint-Martin, Paris, 1825.
- Orbeli, H., *Basni srednevekovoy Armenii, Izbrannye trudy*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1968.
- Pivazian E., "Vardan Aigektsi," *Hai mshakuiti nshanavor gortzichnere*, V-XVIII darer, Yerevan, 1976, pp. 283-295.
- Anasian, H., *Vardan Aigektsin ir norahait yerkeri luisi tak*, Venice, 1969.

13. ARMENIAN CULTURE IN THE FOURTEENTH TO SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

- Leo, *Hayots patmutiun*, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1946.
- Hatsuni, V., *Dastiarakutiune hin hayots kov*, Venice, 1923.
- Movsisian, A., *Urvagtzer hai dprotsi yev mankavarzhakan patmutian (X-XV dd.)*, Yerevan, 1958.

- Voskian, H., *Hovhannes Vanakan yev iur dprotse*, Vienna, 1922.
- Akinian, N., *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner*, vol. 1, Vienna, 1922.
- Adamyan, A., *Esteticheskie vozzreniya crednevekovoy Armenii*, Yerevan, 1955.
- Ormanian, M., *Azgapatum*, Pt. 2, Constantinople, 1914.
- Ishkhanian, R., *Hai matenagitutian patmutiun*, folio 1, Yerevan, 1964.
- Khacherian, L. G., *Gladzori hamalsarane hai mankavarzhakan mtki zargatsman mej (XIII-XIV dd.)*, Yerevan, 1973.
- Avetisian, A., *Hai manrankarchutian Gladzori dprotse*, Yerevan, 1972.
- Arevshatian, S., "Tatevi pilisopayakan dprotse yev Grigor Tatevatsu ashkharhahayatske," *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 4, 1958.
- Matevosian, A., "Grigor Tatevatsin yev Metzopavanki dprotsi himnadrome," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1969.
- Gabrielian, H. G., *Hai pilisopayakan mtki patmutiun*, vol. 2, Yerevan, 1958.
- Chaloyan, V. K., *Hayots pilisopayutian patmutiun*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Yesayi Nchetsi, *Verlutzutiun kerakanutian*, prep. by L. G. Khacherian, Yerevan, 1966.
- Patmutiun nahangin Sisakan, ararial Stepannosi Vorbelian arkepiskoposi Suniats*, i luis entzayiats handerdz tzanotutiambk K. Shahnazariants, vol. 1 and 2, Paris, 1859.
- Hovsepian, G., *Tovma Metzopetsu kianke*, Vagharshapat, 1914.
- Tovma Metzopetsi, *Patmutiun Lank-Tamura yev hajordats iurots*, Paris, 1860.
- Khachikian, L., *XIV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner*, Yerevan, 1950.
- Khachikian, L., *XV dari hayeren dzeragreri hishatakaranner*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1955.
- Hakobian, V., *Manr zhamanakagrutiunner*, XIII-XVIII dd., vol. 1, Yerevan, 1951.
- Arakelian, A., *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun*, vol. 2, Yerevan, 1964.

14. MEDIEVAL LAMENTATIONS (TWELFTH TO FIFTEENTH CENTURIES)

- Nerses Shnorhali, *Voghb Yedesio*, Yerevan, 1973.
- Grigor Tgha, *Banasteghtzutiunner yev poemner*, prep. by A. Sh. Mnatsakanian, Yerevan, 1972.
- Hakobian, G., "Grigor Tgha," *Ejmiatzin*, 1964-1966.
- Dulaurier, E., *Recueil des historiens des croisades, documents arméniens*, Paris, 1869.
- Hakobian, T., and Melik-Bakhshian, S., *Stepanos Orbelian*, Yerevan, 1960.
- Stepannos Orbelian, *Voghb i S. Katoghiken*, foreword and annotations by K. Kostaniant, Tiflis, 1885.
- Khachatur Kecharetsi*, prep. by M. T. Avdalbegian, Yerevan, 1958.
- Tashian, H., *Usumnasirutiunk Stuin Kalistenia Varuts Agheksandri*, Vienna, 1892.
- Simonian, H., *Hai mijnadarian kafaner*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Grigoris Aghtarmarts*, prep. by M. Avdalbegian, Yerevan, 1963.
- Arakel Siunetsi yev ir kertvatznere*, study and publication by M. Poturian, Venice, 1914.
- Adamgirk Arakel Siunetsvo*, publication by M. Poturian, Venice, 1907.
- Anasian, H. S., "Arakel Siunetsi," *Haikakan matenagitutiun*, V-XVIII dd., vol. 2, Yerevan, 1976, pp. 1-88.
- Arakel Baghishetsi*, study, critical texts and annotations by A. Ghazinian, Yerevan, 1971.
- Anasian, H. S., *Haikakan aghbiurnere Biuzandiayi ankman masin*, Yerevan, 1957.
- Anasian, H. S., "Arakel Baghishetsi," *Haikakan matenagitutiun*, V-XVIII dd., vol. 1, Yerevan, 1959, pp. 1106-1143.
- Alishan, Gh., *Sisakan*, Venice, 1893.
- Ormanian, M., *Azgapatum*, Pt. 1, Constantinople, 1912.
- Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 4, Yerevan, 1970.
- Khachatryan, P., *Hai mijnadarian patmakan voghbere*, XIV-XVII dd., study, Yerevan, 1969.
- Durian, Y., *Patmutiun hai matenagrutian*, Jerusalem, 1933.
- Hakobian, V., *Manr zhamanakagrutiunner*, XIII-XVIII dd., Yerevan, vol. 1, 1951; vol. 2, 1956.
- Tchobanian, A., *La Roseaie d'Arménie*, vol. 1, Paris, 1918.

Soperk haikakank, vol. 6, Vienna, 1853.

Hovhannisian, H., *Tatrone mijnadarian Hayastanum*, Yerevan, 1978.

15. MEDIEVAL VERSE (THIRTEENTH TO SIXTEENTH CENTURIES)

Abeghian, M., *Yerker*, vol. 4, 1970; vol. 5, 1975.

Chugaszian, B., *Hai-iranakan grakan arnchutiunner*, Yerevan, 1963.

Hayots hin yev mijnadatian banasteghtzutian krestomatia, Yerevan, 1979.

Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dnei, ed., intro., and commentary by V. Bryusov, Moscow, 1916.

Srednevekovaya armyanskaya lirika, Leningrad, 1972.

Tchobanian, A., *La Roseraie d'Arménie*, Paris, vol. 2, 1923; vol. 3, 1929.

De Blixen, J. L. A., *Antologia de poetas armenios*, Montevideo, 1943.

Alishan, Gh., *Hayots yergk ramkakank*, Venice, 1852.

Miansariants, M., *Knar haikakan*, St. Petersburg, 1868.

Zarbhanalian, G., *Patmutiun hayeren dprutiants*, Venice, 1886.

Zaminian, A., *Patmutiun hayots hin grakanutian*, Beirut, 1941.

Papazian, V., *Patmutiun hayots grakanutian*, Tiflis, 1910.

Bryusov, V., "Hai banasteghtzutiune yev ir nuinutiune dareru entatski mej," *Bazmavep*, 1918, pp. 101-149.

Akinian N., *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner*, vol. 5, Vienna, 1953.

Mkrian, M., *Hai grakanutian patmutiun*, bk. 1, Yerevan, 1940.

XIII-XVIII dareri hai ashkharhik grakanutiun, entir nmuishner, prep. by M. Mkrian, Yerevan, 1938.

Mkrtchian, A., *Niuter X-XVIII dareri hayots grakanutian patmutian hamar*, folio 1, Yerevan, 1945.

Firdusi, banasteghtzi tznndian hazaramiakin nvirvat zhoghovatzu, Yerevan, 1934.

Shahsuvarian, A., *Shahnamen yev haikakan aghbiurnere*, Yerevan, 1967.

Hovnanian, Gh., *Mijnadarian azgayin taghachaputiun ramkakharn*, Vienna, 1911.

Bahatryan, A., *Hin hayots taghachapakan arveste*, Shushi, 1891.

Abeghian, M., *Hayots lezvi taghachaputiun*, Yerevan, 1933.

- Abeghian, M., "Shahnama"-i votanavori chape hai banasteghtzutian mej," *Firdusi*, Yerevan, 1934.
- Acharian, H., *Hayots lezvi patmutiun*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1940.
- Nersisian, V., *Hai mijnadarian taghergutian gegharvestakan mijotsnere (13-16 dd.)*, Yerevan, 1976.

HOVHANNES YERZINKATSI

- Hovhannes Yerznkatsi*, study and texts by A. Srapian, Yerevan, 1958.
- Kiurtian, H., *Yeriza yev Yekeghiats gavar*, vol. 1, Venice, 1953.
- Baghdasarian, E., *Hovhannes Yerznkatsin yev nra khratakan ardzake*, Yerevan, 1977.
- Grigorian, G., *Hovhannes Yerznkatsu pilisopayakan hayiatsknere*, Yerevan, 1962.
- Hovhannes Yerznkatsi, *Havakumn meknutian kerakani*, prep. by L. G. Khacherian, Los Angeles, 1983.
- Adonts, N., *Dioniskiy Frakiyskiy i armianskie tolkovateli*, St. Petersburg, 1915.

FRIK

- Frik, *Banasteghtzutiunner*, prep. by M. Mkrian and Ye. Torosian, Yerevan, 1941.
- Frik, *Tagher*, foreword, text, and addendum by A. T. Ghanalanian, Yerevan, 1982.
- Frik, *Divan* (knnakan usumnasirutun), publication by Tirair arkepiskopos, New York, 1952.
- Hovhannisian, A., *Frike Patma-knnakan luisi tak*, Yerevan, 1955.
- Ghanalanian, A., "Frik," *Hai mshakuiti nshanavor gortzichnere V-XVIII darer*, Yerevan, 1976, pp. 358-368.

KOSTANDIN YERZINKATSI

- Kostandin Yerznkatsi, *Tagher*, prep. by A. Srapian, Yerevan, 1962.
- Kostandin Yerznkatsi XIII daru zhoghovrdakan banasteghtz yev iur kertvatznere*, publication by M. Poturian, Venice, 1905.

- Alishan, Gh., *Hushikk haireniats hayots*, vol. 1, Venice, 1869, pp. 195-215.
- Akinian, N., "Pghndze kaghak yev Kostandin Yerznkatsi yev Mkrtich Naghash," *Grigoris Arajin katoghikos Aghtamari, kiankn u kervatznere*, Vienna, 1958, pp. 427-439.
- Chopanian, A., "Kostandin Yerznkatsi," *Anahit*, no. 5, 1905, pp. 93-98, 187-191.
- Chopanian, A., "Grakan kronik," *Anahit*, 1906, pp. 97-107.

HOVHANNES TLKURANTSI

- Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, *Taghagirk*, publication by N. yeps. Tzovakan, Jerusalem, 1958.
- Hovhannes Tikurantsi, *Tagher*, prep. by E. Pivazian, Yerevan, 1960.
- Kostaniants, K., *Hovhannes Tlkurantsin yev iur taghere*, Tiflis, 1892.

MKRTICH NAGHASH

- Kostaniants, K., *Mkrtich Naghash yev iur taghere*, Vagharshapat, 1898.
- Mkrtich Naghash*, prep. by E. Khondkarian, Yerevan, 1965.

GRIGORIS AGHTAMARTSI

- Kostaniants, K., *Grigoris Aghtamartsin yev iur taghere*, Tiflis, 1898.
- Poturian, M., "Grigoris Aghtamarts," *Bazmavep*, 1905, pp. 491-500.
- Akinian, N., *Grigoris Arajin katoghikos Aghtamari, kiankn u kervatznere*, Vienna, 1958.
- Hovsepien, G., "Grigoris Aghtamarts," *Ararat*, no. 1-12, 1919.
- Grigoris Aghtamarts*, study, critical text and annotations by M. Avdalbegian, Yerevan, 1963.

16. ARMENIAN LITERATURE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

- Miansariants, M., *Knar haikakan*, St. Petersburg, 1868.
- Srvandztiants, G., *Manana*, Constantinople, 1876.
- Nshkhark matenagrutian hayots*, publication by K. Patkanian, St. Petersburg, 1884.
- Akinian, N., *Hing pandukht taghasatsner*, Vienna, 1921.
- Akinian, N., *Matenagrakan hetazotutiunner*, vol. 4, Vienna, 1938.
- Akinian, N., *Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchian*, kiankn u grakan gortzuneutiune, matenagrakan usunmasirutiu, Vienna, 1933.
- Kostaniants, K., *Nor zhoghovatzu*, Tiflis, folios 1 and 2, 1892; folio 3, 1896.
- Poturian, M., *Martiros Ghrimetsi yev ir kertvatznere*, Bucharest, 1924-1930.
- Mnatsakanian, A., *Haikakan mijnadarian zhoghovrdakan yerger*, Yerevan, 1956.
- Mnatsakanian, A., "XVII dari yergich Kosa Yeretse yev nra yergere," *Banber Matenadarani*, no. 3, 1956, pp. 265-267.
- Voskian, H., *Chors hai taghasatsner yev anonts taghere*, Vienna, 1966.
- Hovasap Sebastatsi, *Banasteghtzutiunner*, prep. by V. Georgian, Yerevan, 1964.
- Khachatryan, P., "Hakob Tokhattsi voghbasats," *Gitutiunneri Akademiayi Teghekagir*, no. 7, 1963.
- Khachatryan, P., *Hai mijnadarian patmakan voghbere*, XIV-XVII dd., Yerevan, 1969.
- Sahakian, H., *Yeremia Keomiurchian*, Yerevan, 1964.
- Sahakian, H., *Ush mijnadari hai banasteghtzutiune (XVI-XVII dd.)*, Yerevan, 1975.
- Sahakian, H., "Davit Saladzoretsi," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1972, pp. 166-172.
- Hovhannisian, A., *Drvagner hai azatagrakan mtki patmutian*, vol. 2, Yerevan, 1959.
- Martirosian, A., *Martiros Ghrimetsi*, Yerevan, 1958.
- XIII-XVIII dareri hai ashkharhik grakanutiun*, prep. by M. Mkrian, Yerevan, 1938.
- Abeghian, M. *Yerker*, vol. 4, Yerevan, 1970.

Hayots hin yev mijnadarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia, Yerevan, 1979.

Hai mijnadarian pandkhtutian tagher (XV-XVIII dd.), compiled by Manik Mkrtchian, Yerevan, 1979.

17. MEDIEVAL FOLK SONGS

Alishan, Gh., *Hayots yergk ramikakank*, Venice, 1852.

Alishan, Gh., *Armenian popular songs*, Venice, 1852.

Miansariants, M., *Knar haikakan*, St. Petersburg, 1868.

Tevkants, A. *Hayerg, meghedik, taghk yev yergk*, Tiflis, 1882.

Kostanians, K., *Nor zhoghovatzu*, Tiflis, folios 1 and 2, 1892.

Abeghian, M., *Zhoghovrdakan khagher*, Vagharshapat, 1904; Yerevan, 1940.

Abeghian, M., *Hin gusanakan yerger*, Yerevan, 1931.

Mnatsakanian, A., *Haikakan mijnadarian zhoghovrdakan yerger*, Yerevan, 1956.

Nazarian, Sh., "*Krunk*" *yerge yev nra patmutiune*, Yerevan, 1977.

HAIRENNER

Tevkants, A., *Hayerg, meghedik, taghk yev yergk*, Tiflis, 1882.

Chopanian, A., *Hairenneru burastane*, critical study and annotation, Paris, 1940.

Chopanian, A., *Nahapet Kuchaki divane*, Paris, 1902.

Tchobanian, A., *La Roseraie d'Arménie*, vol. 2, Paris, 1923.

Abeghian, M., "Hin gusanakan zhoghovrdakan yerger," *Yerker*, vol. 2, Yerevan, 1967.

Abeghian, M., "Hai knarakan banahiusutiun," *Yerker*, vol. 2, Yerevan, 1967.

Mnatsakanian, A., "Hairenneri yev Nahapet Kuchaki masin," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 2, 1958.

Mnatsakanian, A., "Mijnadarian siro yergeri norahait andranik zhoghovatzun yev hairenneri hartse," *Ejer hai zhoghovrdi patmutian yev banasirutian*, Yerevan, 1971.

Nahapet Kuchak, *Haireni kargav*, Yerevan, 1957.

Nahapet Kuchak, Yerevan, 1979.

Naapet Kuchak, *Lirika*, "Ayreny," Moscow, 1973.

18. BARDIC LYRICISM

Akhverdian, G., *Hai ashughner*, Tiflis, 1903.

Tchobanian, A., *Les trouvères arméniens*, Paris, 1906.

Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dney, ed., intro., and commentary by V. Bryusov, Moscow, 1916.

Abeghian, M., *Gusanakan zhoghovrdakan tagher*, Yerevan, 1940.

Levonian, G., *Ashughnere yev nrants arveste*, Yerevan, 1944.

Aghayan, M., *Hai gusannere yev gusana-ashughakan arveste*, Yerevan, 1959.

Hai ashughner, XVII-XVIII dd., prep. by H. Sahakian, Yerevan, 1961.

Hai nor grakanutian patmutiun, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1962, pp. 251-272.

Grigorian, Sh. S., *Hai gusanneri yergere yev nrants grakan arandznahatkutiunnere*, Yerevan, 1965.

Kocharian, A., *Hin gusanakan yerger*, Yerevan, 1976.

NAGHASH HOVNATAN

Chopanian, A., *Naghash Hovnatán ashughe yev Hovnatán Hovnatánian nkariche*, Paris, 1910.

Akinian, N., *Hovnatán Naghash yev Naghash Hovnatániank yev irents banasteghtzakan yev nkarchakan ashkhatutiunk*, Vienna, 1911.

Mkrtchian, M., *Naghash Hovnatán*, Yerevan, 1957.

Ghazarian, M., *Hai kerparveste XVII-XVIII darerum*, Yerevan, 1974.

Kazaryan, M., *Khudozhniki Ovnatanyany*, Moscow, 1968.

Naghash Hovnatán, *Tagher*, prep. by A. Mnatsakanian, Yerevan, 1983.

Poeziya Armenii s drevneyshikh vremën do nashikh dney, ed., intro., and commentary by V. Bryusov, Moscow, 1916.

Tchobanian, A., *La Roseraie d'Arménie*, vol. 2, Paris, 1923.

SAYAT-NOVA

Sayat-Nova, *Hayeren khagher*, Yerevan, 1984.

Sayat-Nova, Hayeren, vratseren, adrbejaneren khagheri zhoghovatzu, compiled, ed., and annotated by Morus Hasratian, Yerevan, 1963.

Sayat-Nova, gitakan ashkhatutiunneri zhoghovatzu, Yerevan, 1963.

Sayat-Nova, prep. by G. Akhverdian, Moscow, 1852.

Sayat-Nova - Sayat Nova, khagheri zhoghovatzu, in English, French, and German translation, Yerevan, 1963.

Tumanian, H., *Sayat-Nova*, Yerevan, 1945.

Ghanalanian, A., *Sayat-Novayi steghtzagortzutian zhoghovrdakan akunknere*, Yerevan, 1963.

Sargsian, Kh., *Sayat-Nova*, Yerevan, 1963.

Sevak, P., *Sayat-Nova*, Yerevan, 1969.

Seidov, M., *Sayat-Nova*, Baku, 1954 (in Azerbaijanian).

"Sayat-Nova, tznndian 250-amiaki artiv," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 3, 1963.

Harutiunian, S., *Yergi hanchare: Sayat-Nova*, Yerevan, 1963.

Kochoyan, A. K., *Sayat-Novayi hayeren khagheri bararan*, Yerevan, 1963.

Sayat-Nova, Stikhotvoreniya, intro. by S. Gaysaryan, Leningrad, 1966.

Leonidze, G., *Mgosani saiat' nova*, T'bilisi, 1930.

Melik'set' Begi L., *Saiat'novs vinaoba*, T'bilisi, 1930.

19. ARMENIAN POETRY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Erzrumetsi, Kh., *Hamarotakan imastasirutiun*, vol. 1 and 2, Venice, 1711.

Tadevosian, M., *Haikakan klasitsizmi tesutiune*, Yerevan, 1977.

Terzibashian, V., "Haikakan klasitsizme," *Hai nor grakanutian Patmutiun*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1962, pp. 95-150.

Nazarian, Sh., "XVIII dari hai gravor banasteghtzutian hinmakan arandznahatkutiunnere," *Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, no. 1, 1968, p. 174.

Nazarian, Sh., *Petros Ghapantsi*, Yerevan, 1969.

- Chopanian, A., *Hai ejer*, Paris, 1912.
- Paghtasar Dpir, *Taghikner siro yev karotanats*, Yerevan, 1958.
- Paghtasar Dpir, *Taghikner*, study by Sh. Nazarian, Yerevan, 1985.
- Voskian, H., *Chors hai taghasatsner yev anonts taghere*, Vienna, 1966.
- Mkrtchian, M., *Naghash Hovnatan*, Yerevan, 1957.
- XIII-XVIII dareri hai ashkharhik grakanutiun*, prep. by M. Mkrian, Yerevan, 1938.
- Sarinian, S. N., *Haikakan romantizm*, Yerevan, 1966.
- Hayots hin yev mijnadarian banasteghtzutian krestomatia*, Yerevan, 1979.

20. ARMENIAN CULTURE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: THE MKHITARIST ORDER

- Arakelian, A. G., *Hai zhoghovrdi mtavor mshakuiti zargatsman patmutiun*, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1975.
- Inchikian, A. M., "Neratzutiun," *Hai nor grakanutian patmutiun*, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1962, pp. 15-94.
- Agonts, S., *Patmutiun kenats yev varuts tiarn Mkhitar Sebastatsvo*, Venice, 1810.
- Maghak-Teopilian, M., *Kensagrutiun yereveli arants*, vol. 1, Venice, 1839.
- Sargisian, B., *Yerkhariuramia grakanakan gortzuneutiun yev nshanavor gortzichner Venetiko Mkhitarian miabanutian*, Venice, 1905.
- Hishatakaran yerkhariuramia hobelini Mkhitarian miabanutian*, Venice, 1901.
- Ghazikian, A., *Haikakan nor matengitutiun*, Venice, 1909-1912, pp. 2023-2035.
- Akinian, N., *Aknark me Viennakan Mkhitarian miabanutian grakan gortzuneutian vra*, Vienna, 1912.
- Endhanur gratsutsak Mkhitarian gravacharanotsi*, 1776-1972, Vienna, 1972.
- Gratsutsak Mkhitarian tparanin*, 1700-1978, Venice, 1978.
- Akinian, N., *Dasakan hayerenn yev Viennakan Mkhitarian dprotse*, Vienna, 1932.

Jahukian, G., *Grabari kerakanutian patmutiun (XVII-XIX dd.)*, Yerevan, 1974.

Index

- Aaron (biblical figure), 92
 Abbas I (shah of Persia), 439, 445, 455-57, 488, 509
 Abd ul-Aziz (Arab caliph), 170
 Abegha, 58
 Abeghian, Manuk, 25, 34, 35, 40, 43, 48-50, 64, 72, 113, 115, 128, 133, 142, 244, 270, 278, 282-83, 290-91, 309, 358, 360, 370, 388, 402, 470, 473-74, 487, 537-43, 545, 554-56, 558-61, 564-66, 570, 572, 574-76, 579, 583-84, 587-93, 596-98, 600
 Abel (biblical figure), 92, 101, 102
 Abener (fictional figure), 347
 Abgar (king of Edessa), 93, 94, 144, 148
 Abgar Tokhatetsi, 331
 Abgarian, Georg, 161, 563
 Abov, Georg, 575
 Abovian, Khachatur, 320
 Abraham (biblical figure), 92, 132, 182
 Abraham Ankiuratsi, 348, 351-52, 585
 Abraham Khostovanogh, 93, 135
 Abraham Kretatsi, 456
 Abrahamian, Ashot A., 565
 Abrahamian, Ashot G., 28, 537, 546, 572, 577, 589-90, 601
 Abu-al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri, 572
 Abu-Said, 217
 Abuset (Arab governor of Armenia), 289
 Acharian, Hrachia, 23, 25, 26, 75, 537-38, 545-46, 564, 577
 Achilles (Greek epic figure), 294
 Adam (biblical figure), 92, 101, 102, 143, 199, 200, 342-43, 372, 376, 402, 416, 478
 Adonis (Greek deity), 45
 Adonts, Nikoghayos, 35, 47, 80, 128, 159, 546, 548, 550, 552, 555, 557-58, 562, 588
 Adramelik, *see* Baghdasar.
 Aesop, 308, 311, 315-16, 340, 533, 579-80
 Agatangeghos, 37, 43, 63, 64, 69, 81, 93-95, 98, 102, 105, 108-15, 124, 144, 145, 147, 168, 180, 190, 347, 539, 544, 553, 555-57
 Agha-Mahmed khan, 499
 Aghamalian, Sukias, 532
 Aghavaliants, Sargis, 575
 Aghayian, Edvard B., 28, 545
 Aghayian, Mushegh, 600
 Aghayian, Tzatur, 538
 Aghbalian, Nikol, 600
 Aghbianosians, 69, 559
 Agni (Indian deity), 34, 48, 50
 Ahian, Stepan, 575
 Ahikar the Wise, 82
 Ahura Mazda (Iranian deity), 32, 290
 Aitenian, Arsen, 360, 364, 528-29, 550, 587
 Akakios of Constantinople, 87
 Akhverdian, Georg, 600
 Akinian, Nerses, 128, 129, 142, 171, 427, 433, 470, 543, 546, 550, 552-53, 558, 564-65, 577-78, 584, 588, 593-96, 599
 Alamdarian, Harutiun, 522, 530
 Albert the Great [Albertus Magnus, Saint], 89, 324-25

- Alexander of Macedonia [the Great]
(Greek conqueror), 21, 143-44,
336, 340-41, 509, 561
- Alexander Polyhistor, 286
- Alexianos, 94
- Ali Shir Navasi, 340
- Aliev, G. Yu., 563
- Alishan, Ghevond, 48, 50, 139, 194,
236, 357, 527, 532, 538, 541,
552, 557, 565, 567, 572, 574-75,
577, 580, 584-86, 588-89, 596
- Alpoyachian, Arshak, 365, 588, 596
- Amatuni, Sahak, 565-67
- Amir Khusraw, 340
- Amiran (Georgian titan), 60
- Amirdovlat Amasiatsi, 330
- Amirza Sparkertsi, 346
- Amphicrates of Athens, 30, 31
- Amran (Abkhazian titan), 60
- Anahit [Anea, Aneid, Ani] (Armenian
goddess), 32-34, 110
- Anak (Parthian functionary), 64, 110,
544
- Anania Narekatsi, 240
- Anania Shirakatsi, 48-49, 84-86, 174,
180, 193, 541
- Ananian, Garnik, 589, 596
- Ananian, Poghos, 563
- Ananun (Assyrian hagiographical
figure), 100, 307
- Ananun Meknich, 83, 368
- Anasian, Hakob, 548, 554, 578-80,
584-86, 600
- Andriasian, H., 571
- Andun and Manetun (apocryphal fig-
ures), 102
- Anna Batonishvili, 499, 502
- Anninskiy, A., 543
- Anonymous Historian [Artzruni], 223,
227-28, 570
- Antabian, Pailak, 571
- Antaeus (Greek deity), 119, 294
- Anthony Gaudin, 533
- Antony of Thebes, 422
- Apaghan, 339
- Aphrahat, 80, 93
- Aphrodite (Greek goddess), 34, 45
- Aphthonius, 83
- Apirat Pahlavuni (prince), 266
- Apollo (Greek deity), 34, 56, 540
- Ara Geghetsik [Ara the Handsome]
(Armenian mythological king),
32, 45-47, 54, 143, 146
- Arakel Baghishetsi, 280, 303, 306,
346-52, 361, 426, 584-86
- Arakel Davrizhetsi, 300, 333, 456-58
- Arakel Shirakvanetsi, 341
- Arakel Siunetsi, 80, 327, 341-346,
365, 473, 584
- Arakelian, Arakel, 537-38, 545
- Arakelian, Babken, 538
- Arakelian, Varag, 247, 262, 562, 564,
572-73
- Aram (Armenian patriarch), 20, 40,
44-45, 54, 143, 146
- Aramaniak (son of Haik), 42
- Aramazd [Aramazd-Zeus] (Armenian
deity), 32, 40, 110, 542
- Aramuni, Khoren, 590
- Arevshatian, Sen, 549-50, 581-82
- Argavan (mythological figure), 58
- Arghun khan, 375
- Arim-Aram, *see* Aram
- Aristakes (Catholicos), 91, 544, 553
- Aristakes Lastivertsi, 221, 228-32,
267, 333, 570
- Aristarchos, 82
- Aristides the Athenian, 81, 172
- Ariston of Pella, 58, 145
- Aristophanes, 533
- Aristotle, 84-86, 174, 235, 328-29,
340, 414, 416, 459
- Arius, 553-54
- Armaghan (epic figure), 286-87, 294-
95
- Armen, Hrand K., 560
- Arpiarian, Arpiar, 598
- Arsen (hero of Avarair), 139
- Arshak II (king of Armenia), 63, 64,
115-22, 150-51

- Arshak III (king of Armenia), 63, 115
 Arshak Partev (king of Persia), 144
 Arshakunis [Arsacids], 33, 63, 66, 69,
 110, 116, 119, 124, 153, 348,
 351, 354, 585
 Artashes (legendary king of Armenia),
 39-41, 54-62, 336
 Artashes I (king of Armenia), 21, 28,
 29, 31, 53, 144, 148, 537
 Artashes II (king of Armenia), 53, 148
 Artashesians, 29, 53, 161, 176
 Artashir (king of Armenia), 152
 Artashir (king of Persia), 63, 110
 Artavan (dragon-born), 41
 Artavazd (abbot), 99
 Artavazd (legendary king of Armen-
 ia), 39-41, 54, 58-61, 290-91
 Artavazd II (king of Armenia), 21, 30,
 53, 144
 Artavazd Mamikonian (prince), 64
 Artemis (Greek goddess), 33, 540
 Artin (troubadour), 599
 Artit (bishop), 91
 Artzrunis, 40, 215, 223, 226, 419, 486,
 598
 Asanet (biblical figure), 101
 Asatur, Georg, 600
 Asatur, Hrant, 521, 601
 Asclepiades, 85, 569
 Asclepius, 84, 87
 Ashot Bagratuni (Armenian com-
 mander), 289
 Ashot Yerkat (king of Armenia), 224
 Ashtart [Derketoy] (Phoenician god-
 dess), 45
 Ashusha (Georgian prince), 123, 125
 Ashvins (Indian mythological twins),
 285
 Askerian, Vrtanes, 533, 538
 Aspins (Iranian mythological twins),
 286
 Astghik (Armenian goddess), 32, 34,
 45, 110
 Astghu Tsolatzin (epic figure), 294
 Astvatzatur Berdakatsi, 450
 Astvatzatur Metzopetsi, 426-27
 Astvatzatur vardapet, 305, 414
 Atargatis [Astarte] (Assyrian god-
 dess), 45
 Atayian, Robert, 569
 Athanasius of Alexandria, 92
 Atom (hero of Avarair), 97
 Atom Mokatsi (prince), 156-57
 Atovmians (martyrs), 95, 195
 Atticus (Patriarch), 76
 Avagian, Suren, 581
 Avdalbegian, Mayis, 420, 427-28,
 551, 553-54, 583-84, 587, 593-
 94
 Avdalbegian, Tateos, 569
 Avde (mother of Sanatruk), 54
 Avetikian, Gabriel, 523, 527-29, 565,
 567, 573
 Avetisian, Zhofez, 596
 Avgerian, Harutiun, 529, 550
 Avgerian, Mkrtich, 86, 218, 527, 529,
 531, 543, 550, 552, 556
 Azaria Jughayetsi (Catholics), 441
 Azaria Sasnetsi, 442
 Azhdahak [Biurasp, Astiages, Azhi
 Dahakan] (Persian mythological
 figure), 51-53, 60-61, 146, 291,
 354
 Bab of Franks (epic figure), 294
 Bagarat Bagratuni (prince), 155
 Baghdasar [Adramelik] (epic figure),
 284-86, 293
 Baghdasarian, Edvard, 577, 588
 Bagher oghli Ghazar (troubadour), 599
 Baghranian, Movses, 524
 Bagratuni, Arsen, 360, 364, 522-23,
 527-28, 548, 550, 587
 Bagratunis, 142, 146, 155, 163, 215,
 223-24, 226, 228, 232, 234, 486
 Bahatryan, Avetik, 360, 587
 Bardaisan, 145, 182
 Bardisho (martyr), 307
 Bardos (son of Torgom), 541

- Barlaam (fictional figure), 346-47, 459
- Barsegh, 589-90
- Barsegh Anetsi (Catholicos), 266
- Barsegh Chon, 160, 179
- Barseghian, L. A., 536
- Barsham (Assyrian mythological figure), 44, 48
- Barsum the Hermit, 307
- Bartholomew (Apostle), 67, 543, 581
- Bartholomew of Bonona, 323-25, 581
- Bartikian, Hrach, 571
- Basil I (Byzantine emperor), 175
- Basil of Caesarea, 80, 85, 89, 92, 118, 171-72, 566
- Bastamians, Vahan, 579
- Baudelaire, Charles, 407
- Baumgartner, A., 550
- Bedieddin Tavrizi, 434
- Bedrosian, Robert, 579
- Bel [Nebrovt, Nimrod] (legendary figure), 41-44, 61, 146, 147, 541, 561
- Benjamin (the elder), 546
- Berosos the Babylonian, 286
- Besika [Gabashvili], 512
- Betge, Hans, 485
- Biuzandatsi, Norair, 555, 557, 570
- Bogharian, Norair [Tzovakan], 592
- Bogomils [Cathares, Albigensians, Waldensians], 205
- Bonaventura, 323
- Bopp, Frantz, 23
- Boret, E., 564
- Borisov, A., 537
- Boticelli, 243
- Bousset, W., 550
- Brandes, Georg, 446, 595
- Brenner, Henrich, 530, 560
- Brkisho (Catholicos), 69
- Brosset, Marie, 457, 530, 564, 570
- Browne, Edward, 562
- Brutian, Georg, 600
- Bryusov, Valeri, 128, 359, 394, 407, 474, 575, 584, 587, 591-92, 598, 600
- Budagh Oghlan (troubadour), 599
- Buddha (founder of Buddhism), 346
- Bugha (Arab governor of Armenia), 226, 289
- Bugha (traitor), 375
- Byron (Lord) [George Gordon Noel], 529
- Cadernmere, A., 561
- Caesar Bardas [Vard Mamikonian], 175
- Cain (biblical figure), 92, 101, 102
- Callisthenes of Olynth [Pseudo-Callisthenes], 82, 141, 338, 340-41, 583
- Cappelletti, J., 561
- Carrière, Auguste, 142, 552, 560
- Catherine II (Russian empress), 440
- Cato, 533
- Caucas (son of Torgom), 541
- Ceillier, R., 550
- Chaloyian, Vazgen K., 87, 551
- Chamchian, Mikayel, 229, 527-28, 531, 556, 559, 562, 585, 588, 592
- Chauvin, Victor, 460
- Chavchavadze, Alexander, 512
- Cheraz, Minas, 598
- Chmshkik-Sultan (epic figure), 288-89
- Chopianian, Arshak, 469, 473, 485, 495, 584-85, 589-90, 592-93, 597-601
- Christopher Columbus, 453
- Chugaszian, Babgen, 354, 433, 586, 594, 599
- Chukhajian, Tigran, 121
- Cicero, 171
- Cid (Spanish epic figure), 294
- Clemens Galanus, 280, 460-61, 581-82
- Clement of Alexandria, 145
- Cleopatra (Egyptian queen), 47

- Constantine Dragas (Byzantine emperor), 586
- Constantine the Great (Roman emperor), 70, 94, 348, 585
- Constantine IX Monomachus (Byzantine emperor), 228
- Constantine VIII Porphyrogenitus (Byzantine emperor), 175
- Conybeare, Frederick, 79, 550, 560, 570
- Cox, Claude, 548
- Crassus (Roman consul), 30
- Cyril of Alexandria, 93, 127
- Cyril of Jerusalem, 80, 93, 568
- Cyrus (king of Persia), 51, 52, 542
- Daniel (Assyrian bishop), 74, 75, 93, 545
- Daniel (biblical prophet), 182
- Daniel Salakhatsi, 307
- Daniel the Syrian, 69, 90, 93
- Dante Alighieri, 47, 240, 255, 342
- David (biblical king), 178, 180-81, 193, 247, 265, 332, 335, 410, 459, 576
- David of Sasun (epic figure), 112, 286-97, 576
- Davit Anhaght [Nerginatsi], 83-85, 172-74, 309, 329, 559
- Davit Baghishetsi, 455
- Davit Bagratuni (Armenian commander), 289
- Davit Bek (Armenian commander), 440
- Davit Dvneti, 99, 195, 303, 305
- Davit Geghametsi, 445
- Davit Haikazn, 453
- Davit Harkatsi, 85
- Davit Hiupatos, 85
- Davit Kerakan, 83, 127, 368
- Davit Kiurapaghat, 584
- Davit Mamikonian (prince), 127
- Davit Saladzoretsi, 441-42, 447-50, 595
- Davtag Kertogh, 166-68, 190, 276, 333, 564
- Demeter (Greek diety), 339
- Demirchian, Derenik, 128, 139, 283, 320, 558
- Der Melkonian-Minassian, Chaké, 576
- Diakonov, Igor, 23
- Diana (Roman goddess), 33
- Diocletian (Roman emperor), 110
- Diodorus Siculus, 145
- Dionysius Thrax, 82, 83, 235, 238, 360, 368, 582
- Dowsett, Charles J. F., 563
- Drastamat (eunuch), 120, 121
- Dulaurier, Edouard, 160, 233, 530, 570-71, 575, 583
- Dumézil, Georges, 576
- Dupont-Sommer, A., 537
- Duval, R., 551
- Dzenov Hovan (epic figure), 285-86, 292-95
- Egaz (troubadour), 599
- Elias the Syrian, 87
- Eliazar (biblical figure), 92
- Emin, Mkrtich, 35, 43, 48, 283, 538-40, 545, 554, 558, 561, 564-65, 571
- Ephraem [the Syrian] Syrus, 80, 87, 89, 93-94, 182, 206, 307
- Epiphanius of Cyprus, 81, 172
- Euclid, 222, 235, 307
- Euhemerus, 145
- Eunabius of Saldis, 171
- Euripides, 30, 533
- Eusebius of Caesarea, 86, 87, 92, 94, 145, 286, 531, 562
- Eusebius of Emesa, 87
- Eustathios of Sebastia, 553
- Evagoras, 145
- Evagrius of Pontus, 80
- Eve (biblical figure), 101, 102, 342-43, 376, 402

- Fahrad (Iranian fictional figure), 509
 Farideddin Attari (sheikh), 434, 590-91
 Febur, M., 578
 Felekian, Harutium, 139
 Fenelon, François, 533
 Feydit, Frederic, 576
 Fil'shtinskie, I. M., 578
 Firdawsi, 61, 340, 398-99, 572, 591
 Fizuli, 533
 Florival, Le Vaillant de, 530, 561
 Forrer, E., 536
 Francisco Rivola, 460
 Frik, 358, 361, 365-67, 373-84, 392, 395, 415, 434, 461, 473, 587-90
 Gabriel (archangel), 92, 269, 292, 427, 431
 Gabrielian, Henri, 326, 580, 582
 Gadisho (apostate), 126
 Gagik (abbot), 99, 307
 Gagik (legendary king of Armenia), 284
 Gagik II (king of Armenia), 233
 Gagik Abasian (king of Armenia), 233
 Gagik Artzruni (king of Armenia), 227, 419
 Gail Vahan (prince), 169
 Galanderian, Nikol, 598
 Galens, 569
 Galoyian, Galust, 538
 Galust Kaitzak, 442
 Gamkrelidze, Tamaz V., 536
 Gantarian [Kesarian], Samuel, 558
 Garagashian, Anton [Matatia], 129, 528, 532, 545, 550, 557, 559, 561-62
 Garegin Srvandztiants (hero of Avarair), 139
 Garitte, Gerard, 555
 Garsoïan, Nina G., 557-58, 562, 570
 Gasparian, Haik, 572
 Gasparian, M., 533
 Gaterchian, Hovsep, 532, 542-43, 550, 552, 556, 559, 566
 Gavukchian, Martiros, 24, 536-37
 Gayiane (saint), 113
 Geghamian, Margar, 533
 Gelzer, Heinrich, 35, 45, 48, 538, 541
 Genghis Khan (Mongol conqueror), 294
 Georg Khubov, 518
 Georg Skevratsi, 304
 Georg Yerznkatsi, 327
 Georgi XII (king of Georgia), 509
 Georgian, Vazgen, 573
 Ghanalanian, Aram, 575, 589, 597
 Ghapantsian, Grigor, 20, 23, 26, 27, 35, 47, 536-38
 Ghazan khan (Mongol ruler), 217, 339
 Ghazar Jahketsi (Catholicos), 518, 584
 Ghazar Parpetsi, 73, 94, 105, 114-15, 123-29, 131, 147, 157, 548, 553, 555-56, 558
 Ghazar Tokhatetsi, 442
 Ghazarian, Mania, 599
 Ghazinian, Arshaluis, 390, 572-73, 585, 591
 Ghevond Vanandetsi, 78, 79, 132, 134, 135, 180
 Ghevond Vardapet [Yerets], 142, 158, 169-71, 300, 565
 Ghevondian priests (martyrs), 129, 135, 196-97, 204
 Ghul Arghuni (troubadour), 599
 Gibbon, Edward, 458
 Gilbertus Porretanus (Gilbert de la Porrée), 325
 Gilgamesh (Assyro-Babylonian mythological figure), 287
 Giovanni Bellini, 243
 Giut (Catholicos), 126, 140, 164-65
 Gnel (prince), 39, 150
 Gochunian, Misak, 573
 Goethe, J., 301
 Gohar (epic figure), 294-95
 Goliath (biblical figure), 576
 Gorgonos (Greek commander), 156
 Gorias (Assyrian hagiographical figure), 93, 109

- Gregory of Nazianzen [Nazianzenus], 80, 89, 91-92, 171
 Gregory of Nyssa, 85, 89, 91, 145, 569
 Gregory the Great [Saint], 89
 Grigor Anavarzetsi (Catholicos), 303-04, 306, 322, 337, 572
 Grigor Apirat (nephew of Nerses Shnorhali), 275
 Grigor Baluetsi, 305
 Grigor Daranaghetsi, 455
 Grigor the Elder, 233
 Grigor II Vkayaser (Catholicos), 180, 217, 265-66, 302, 304, 307, 577
 Grigor III Pahlavuni (Catholicos), 196, 217, 265-67, 304
 Grigor IV Tgha (Catholicos), 217, 238, 265, 280-81, 335-37, 361, 469, 583
 Grigor Karnetsi, 307
 Grigor Khlatsi [Tzerents], 280-81, 303-04, 306, 327-28, 346, 572, 577, 585
 Grigor Magistros, 58, 61, 80, 83-84, 221-23, 265-68, 271, 280, 307, 333, 354, 364-65, 370, 452, 542, 569, 572
 Grigor Marzvantzi, 555
 Grigor Mlichetsi, 219
 Grigor Narekatsi, 184-85, 195-96, 198, 203, 236, 238-63, 266, 268, 270, 276, 279-80, 306, 333, 345, 354, 359, 361, 363-64, 386, 391, 403, 405, 411, 415, 420, 447, 469, 472-73, 479, 530, 567, 572-73
 Grigor Oshakantsi, 514, 518
 Grigor Partev [Gregory the Illuminator] (Catholicos), 67, 69, 70-71, 91, 94, 96, 98, 100, 108-13, 116, 164, 168, 189, 204, 206, 208, 275, 306, 344-45, 348, 351, 544-45, 553, 555, 557, 564, 585
 Grigor Rabuni, 419, 422
 Grigor Skevratsi (Catholicos), 191, 208, 218
 Grigor Tatevatsi, 84, 304, 326-29, 342, 367, 582
 Grigorian, Georg, 588
 Grigorian, Grigor, 60, 283, 540, 556, 559-60
 Grigorian, K. N., 586
 Grigorian, R., 572
 Grigorian, Shavigh, 471, 597
 Grigoris (physician), 217, 220
 Grigoris Aghtamartsi, 341, 363, 367, 384, 419-36, 448, 473, 489, 496, 593-94
 Grishashvili, Ioseb, 600
 Grogh (pagan evil spirit), 292, 539
 Grousset, René, 233, 571
 Gushakian, Torgom (bishop), 573
 Gutschmid, Alfred von, 142, 160, 552, 555, 557, 560
 Hafiz, 389, 474
 Hagar (biblical figure), 278
 Haik [Haik-Orion] (Armenian patriarch), 19-20, 32, 40-45, 47, 49, 52, 54, 61, 112, 143, 146, 147, 336, 538, 540-41
 Hakob Aknetsi, 442
 Hakob Artzkeatsi, 435, 594
 Hakob Jrpetian, 460
 Hakob Karnetsi, 455
 Hakob Klayetsi (Catholicos), 208
 Hakob Krnetsi, 325
 Hakob Meghapart, 331, 566
 Hakob Nalian, 514, 521
 Hakob Sanahnetsi, 180, 232
 Hakob Srchetsi, 307
 Hakob Ssetsi, 454
 Hakob Tarkman, 325
 Hakob Tokhatetsi, 442-45, 459, 595
 Hakobian, Grigor, 194, 566, 574
 Hakobian, Vazgen, 578, 596
 Hamam Areveltsi, 83, 239, 368
 Hamazasp (hagiographical figure), 97, 99, 303
 Hanway (English traveler), 533
 Hartun Oghli (troubadour), 488

- Harun al-Rashid (Arab caliph), 170
 Harutiunian, Set, 559, 561, 600
 Hasratian, Morus, 505, 600
 Hastings, James, 547
 Havos (son of Torgom), 541
 Hecataeus of Miletus, 21
 Heine, Heinrich, 407
 Helen (Byzantine empress, mother of Constantine), 94
 Hephaestus (Greek deity), 34
 Heraclius (Byzantine emperor), 160-61
 Hercules (Greek deity), 48, 285, 287
 Hermes (Greek deity), 34
 Hermes Trismegistus, 84, 87, 171
 Herodotus, 20, 51, 145
 Heros (son of Torgom), 541
 Hesiod, 30, 32, 368, 533
 Hesychius of Jerusalem, 87
 Hetum I (king of Armenia), 233, 310, 463, 581
 Hetum II (king of Armenia), 304
 Hetum Patmich, 218
 Hetumians, 217
 Hewsen, Robert W., 541
 Hippocrates, 569
 Hippolytus, 81
 Hiurmiuzian, Yedvard, 360, 522, 527, 587
 Hmayiak Dimaksian (hero of Avarair), 139
 Hmayiak Mamikonian (hero of Avarair), 76, 125
 Homer, 32, 47, 145, 223, 238, 240, 265, 533, 572
 Horace, 533
 Hovasap Sebastatsi, 123, 306, 341, 450
 Hovhan Khostovanogh, 78
 Hovhan Mairagometsi, 100, 160
 Hovhan Mamikonian, 37, 168-69, 452, 564
 Hovhan Odznetsi, 172, 180, 191, 193
 Hovhan Vanandetsi, 522-23
 Hovhan Yekeghetsatsi, 75, 78-79
 Hovhannes (physician), 100
 Hovhannes (son of Sayat-Nova), 499
 Hovhannes Archishetsi, 327
 Hovhannes Dardel, 217
 Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi (Catholicos), 128, 158, 163, 223-26, 232, 332-33, 563
 Hovhannes Holov [Kostandnupolsetsi], 459
 Hovhannes Karnetsi, 281, 514, 517, 521
 Hovhannes Kolot, 327
 Hovhannes Kozern, 306
 Hovhannes Krnetsi, 324-25, 581-82
 Hovhannes Makuetsi, 442, 445
 Hovhannes Mandakuni (Catholicos), 100, 126, 179-80, 188-90, 332, 599
 Hovhannes Mshetsi, 334, 442
 Hovhannes Narekatsi, 240
 Hovhannes Sarkavag [Imastaser], 84, 180, 196-97, 235-37, 264, 267, 304, 572, 590
 Hovhannes Tavushetsi, 309
 Hovhannes Terzntsi, 457
 Hovhannes Tlkurantsi, 123, 363, 366-67, 384, 401-14, 419, 425, 434, 448, 469, 496, 587, 592
 Hovhannes Tlkurantsi (Catholicos), 592
 Hovhannes Tutunji, 453-55
 Hovhannes Tzortzoretsi, 323, 588
 Hovhannes vardapet, 490
 Hovhannes Vorotnetsi, 84, 326-28, 342, 367
 Hovhannes Yerets, 597
 Hovhannes Yerznkatsi [Pluz], 180, 197, 208, 217, 327, 367-73, 384, 396, 473, 521, 568, 588
 Hovhannissian, Ashot, 373, 578, 589
 Hovhannisian, H. (deacon), 561
 Hovhannisian, Hovhannes, 139
 Hovnan Khutetsi (Armenian commander), 289
 Hovnanian, Ghevond, 593, 596

- Hovnatanian family, 490
 Hovsep Emin, 440
 Hovsep I Vayotsdzoretsi (Catholicos), 78, 106, 135, 559
 Hovsep Konstannupolsetsi, 303, 307
 Hovsep Paghnatsi, 75, 79
 Hovsepien, Garegin (Catholicos), 577, 582-83, 593, 596
 Hripsime (saint), 64, 96, 98, 110-13, 189-90, 271
 Hripsimants (martyrs), 95, 188-89, 196, 271, 544, 555
 Hropanos of Samosata, 74
 Hübschmann, Heinrich, 23, 160, 164, 536
 Hughita (wife of Gregory the Illuminator), 109
 Husik (Catholicos), 94, 117, 119
 Huxley, George, 570

 Iamblichus, 85
 Inchichian, Ghukas, 523, 527, 532
 Indra (Indian deity), 32, 48-50, 576
 Irakle II (king of Georgia), 498-99, 509
 Irenaeus, 94
 Isaac (biblical figure), 92
 Isabella (queen of Spain), 453
 Isahakian, Avetik, 297, 301, 320
 Ishtar (mythological figure), 45
 Ismayel (shah of Persia), 420
 Ismil Khatun (epic figure), 287
 Israyel (vardapet), 323
 Israyel Ori (Armenian leader), 440, 523
 Ivane Siunetsi (prince), 327
 Ivane Zakarian (prince), 310
 Ivanov, V. V., 536
 Izdubar (mythological figure), 45

 Jacob (biblical figure), 92
 Jacob (James) of Nisibis, 80, 90, 92-93, 102, 118
 Jagha, 107
 Jahukian, Georg, 23, 537, 550, 602

 Jakhjakhian, Manuel, 523
 Jalaluddin Rumi, 389
 James (brother of Christ), 102
 James (Apostle), 193
 Janpolat Dev (epic figure), 293
 Japheth (son of Noah), 44, 143
 Jeremiah (biblical prophet), 154, 265, 332, 335, 446
 Jevansher (prince), 166
 Jivani (troubadour), 139, 599
 Joachim and Anna (apocryphal figures), 102
 Joasaph (fictional figure), 346-47, 459, 585
 Job (the Blessed), 91
 Johan Stiling, 555
 John (Apostle), 92, 193
 John (Evangelist), 92, 268
 John Anglus, 325
 John the Baptist (biblical figure), 92, 208, 246, 410
 John Chrysostom, 80, 87, 89, 93
 John Damascene, 206, 307
 John the Grammarian, 175
 John Milton, 342
 John of Sinai, 307
 John VIII (Byzantine emperor), 586
 Joseph the Beautiful (biblical figure), 101
 Josephus Flavius, 145
 Joshua (biblical figure), 92
 Judas (biblical figure), 199, 416
 Julius Africanus, 144-45
 Jupiter (Roman deity), 32

 Kajuni, Manuel, 527
 Kamsarakans, 126, 146
 Kanayan, Stepan, 556
 Karamian, Nikoghayos, 584-85
 Karapet (father of Sayat-Nova), 498
 Karst, Joseph, 26
 Karsun Chiugh Deghdzun Tzam (epic figure), 285, 291, 294-96
 Kartlos (son of Torgom), 541
 Keble, John, 206

- Kekelidze, Korneli, 546
 Khachatur Erzrumetsi, 522, 532, 601
 Khachatur Kecharetsi, 333-34, 337-41, 365-66, 420, 426, 473, 572, 583
 Khachatur Kharberdatsi, 426
 Khachatur Taronatsi, 197
 Khachatur Tokhatetsi, 450, 453-54
 Khachatrian, Poghos, 572-73, 583, 595
 Khachatrian, V. I., 536
 Khachaturian, Garegin (bishop), 573
 Khacherian, Levon, 368, 584, 588
 Khachik (prince), 233
 Khachikian, Levon, 419, 470, 542, 578, 580-82, 588
 Khad (Catholicos), 117, 119
 Khalatians, Grigor, 26, 43, 129, 142, 283, 539-40, 552, 555, 560
 Khaldarian, Grigor, 530
 Khaldi (Uartian deity), 27, 28, 538
 Khandut khanum (epic figure), 288, 293-95, 297
 Khaspek Khachatur, 442, 450
 Kheranian, Mkrtich, 573
 Khnkoyian, Atabeg, 320
 Khondkarian, Edvard, 593
 Khoren Khorkhoruni (hero of Avarair), 139
 Khoren Khostovanogh, 135
 Khorohbut, 145
 Khosrov (prince), 99
 Khosrov Andzevatsi (bishop), 179, 240, 565
 Khosrov Gandzaketsi, 305
 Khosrov I the Great (king of Armenia), 63, 64, 110, 119
 Khosrov II Kodak (king of Armenia), 63, 115, 116
 Khosrov II Parviz (king of Persia), 159-63, 509
 Khosrovidukht (sister of king Trdat), 111
 Khosrovidukht (sister of Vahan Goghntatsi), 194
 Khosrovik Targmanich, 85
 Khudabashian, Aleksandr, 530
 Khutlu-bugha (prince), 339
 Kichik Nova (troubadour), 599
 Kirakos (cleric), 228
 Kirakos (martyr), 195
 Kirakos Areveltsi, 303, 577
 Kirakos Gandzaketsi, 128, 179, 234, 274, 306, 309, 563, 566-67, 571, 577
 Kirakos Gediktsi, 577
 Kirakos vardapet, 577
 Kirakos Yerznkatsi, 191, 209-10, 568
 Kiuleserian, Babgen, 128, 558, 592
 Kiurtian, Harutiun, 470, 588, 597, 601
 Kobidze, D. I., 586
 Komitas I Aghtsetsi (Catholicos), 100, 160, 180, 189-91, 197, 566
 Komitas vardapet (Sghomon Sghomonian), 568, 597
 Komroff, M., 536
 Koriun, 73-75, 78-79, 81, 95, 105-09, 115, 124, 145, 147, 151, 180, 545-46, 548, 554-55
 Kosa Yerets, 441, 450
 Kostandin (painter), 219
 Kostandin I Bardzraberdtsi (Catholicos), 234, 581
 Kostandin III Kesaratsi (Catholicos), 322
 Kostandin VI Vahkatsi (Catholicos), 414
 Kostandin Yerznkatsi, 340, 361, 365-67, 384-405, 410, 415, 426, 434, 461, 496, 587-88, 590-91
 Kostanians, Karapet, 427, 470, 542, 569, 583, 586, 592-94, 596
 Kouymjian, Dickran, 553
 Kozbadin (epic figure), 289, 295
 Kretschmer, E., 536
 Krpo of Mush, 282
 Krylov, Ivan, 308
 Kudian, Mischa, 573, 576
 Kup (epic figure), 289
 Kurkik Jalali (epic figure), 285-87

- La Croze, Maturin, 79, 142, 530, 560
 La Fontaine, Jean, 308
 Labubna of Edessa, 144-45, 557
 Lafontaine, Guy, 109, 555-56
 Lagarde, Paul de, 552, 555
 Langlois, Victor, 530, 551, 555, 561, 571
 Lauer, M., 561
 Laurent, Jean, 233, 571
 Lazarus (saint), 186
 Lehmann-Haupt, Karl F., 26
 Leibnitz, Gottfried, 458
 Lekos (son of Torgom), 541
 Leo, 72, 139, 224, 321, 410, 525, 543, 564, 569, 580, 592, 602
 Leonidze, Georgi, 600
 Leonine Mher [Lion or Great] (epic figure), 33, 285-87, 291-93
 Leto (Greek goddess), 285
 Levon II (king of Armenia), 234, 336, 463
 Levon Tesaghatsi [Leo the Philosopher], 175
 Levon VI Lusignan (king of Armenia), 217-18, 321
 Levonian, Garegin, 597, 601
 Leyli and Mejnun (Iranian fictional figures), 509
 Liparit (general), 300, 411
 Little Mher (epic figure), 33, 60, 287-91, 293-94, 296
 Lourdet, Simon P., 530
 Lucanus, 533
 Lüders, Aneliese, 233, 571
 Luke (Evangelist), 92
 Macler, Frédéric, 160, 164
 Madoyian, Arshak, 589, 596
 Maghakia Ghrimetsi, 326
 Mahomed II (Ottoman sultan), 349, 586
 Mahtesi Siruni, 488
 Maksoudian, Krikor H., 555, 570
 Malkhasiants, Stepan, 115, 143, 161, 164, 543, 545, 554, 556-57, 560-61, 563
 Mambre Vertzanogh, 84, 127, 172
 Mamik-Konak (Armenian commander), 291
 Mamikonians, 63-64, 116-17, 121, 124, 126, 146, 161, 168, 595
 Manandian, Hakob, 72, 142, 536, 542-43, 545, 550-52, 561, 564, 577
 Manchuk Amira (Turkic warrior), 411
 Mane (saint), 544
 Manuel Mamikonian (Armenian commander), 64, 121
 Manuelian, Levon, 297
 Manukian, Gurgen M., 230, 570
 Mar Abas Catina [Maraba Mtzurnatsi], 143, 145, 561
 Mar Augen, 90, 93
 Mar, Nikoghayos, 27, 159-60, 283, 309, 315-16, 545, 554-55, 557, 572, 579-80, 585
 Marcel, Luc-André, 253-54, 573
 Maré, Gabriel, 241
 Margar of Ani, 219
 Margare Archishetsi, 419-20
 Mariam (daughter of Sayat-Nova), 499
 Mark (Evangelist), 92
 Markwart, Joseph, 77, 160, 541, 547
 Marmar (wife of Sayat-Nova), 499
 Martin Luther, 79, 221
 Martin of Troppaus [Oppavia], 325
 Martiros Ghrimetsi, 80, 441, 446, 451, 453, 595
 Martiros Kharasartsi, 450
 Martiros Kharbertsi, 452
 Martiros Yerznkatsi, 453
 Martirosian, Artashes, 68-69, 73, 537, 540, 544-46, 596
 Maruta Nprkerttsi, 100, 307
 Mary Magdalene (biblical figure), 92
 Mashtots Yeghivardetsi (Catholicos), 179, 306
 Matatian, Yeghishe, 557

- Mather, Maurice, 536
 Matteos Jughayesti, 305, 327
 Matteos Tzaretsi, 458, 548
 Matteos Urhayetsi, 221, 223, 231-33, 300, 571
 Matthew (Evangelist), 92
 Maurice (Byzantine emperor), 159, 162
 McDermond, B., 543
 Meillet, Antoine, 23, 538
 Meineke, A., 536
 Melchizedek (biblical figure), 92
 Melik-Ohanjanian, Karapet, 283, 555, 571, 578, 586
 Melik-Pashayian, K. V., 542
 Melikian, Spiridon, 569
 Melikishvili, Georgi A., 537
 Melikset (son of Sayat-Nova), 499
 Melikset-bek, Levon, 541, 600
 Melkonian, M. G., 565
 Menander, 533
 Meruzhan Artzruni (prince), 122
 Meshchaninov, I. I., 538
 Mesrop Mashtots, 25, 66, 73-79, 81, 95, 97, 100, 105-08, 124, 127, 140, 151-53, 165, 178-86, 188, 190, 195, 206, 209, 256, 306, 364, 518, 545-46, 549, 559
 Mesrop Naghhash, 414
 Mesrop Vayotsdzoretsi (the Elder), 128, 306, 347
 Methodius of Olympus, 81, 172
 Metrodorus of Skepsia, 31
 Metzarents, Misak, 598
 Miansariants, Mikayel, 596
 Michael (archangel), 92
 Michael the Syrian, 307
 Mihr (Iranian mythological figure), 32-34, 287, 290
 Mihrdatiants, Tadeos M. Ter-Astvat-
 atrian, 160, 562
 Mihrnerseh (Persian commander), 126, 134
 Militta (Assyrian goddess), 45
 Miller, Walter, 536
 Minas Amdetsi (Patriarch), 455, 573
 Minas Tokhatetsi, 442, 451-52
 Minotaur (Greek mythological figure), 54
 Mirijanian, Levon, 540-41, 560
 Mirimanian, B., 543
 Mistrih, Vincent, 577
 Mithra (Iranian deity), 34, 287, 567
 Mkhitar Anetsi, 164, 223
 Mkhitar Aparanetsi, 323
 Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, 563
 Mkhitar Gosh, 234, 309-14, 318, 452, 579
 Mkhitar Heratsi, 217, 220, 265, 274
 Mkhitar Sebastatsi (abbot), 326, 525-28, 601
 Mkhitar Yerznkatsi, 327
 Mkhitarists [Mkhitarians], 326, 331, 522, 524-33, 535, 552, 554, 561, 566, 570, 574, 583-84, 601
 Mkrian, Mkrtich, 255, 545, 573, 589
 Mkrtchian, Manik, 599
 Mkrtich (troubadour), 599
 Mkrtich Naghhash, 305, 384, 414-20, 426, 446, 473, 593
 Mnatsakanian, Asatur, 275, 470, 542, 546, 563-64, 583, 594, 597-98
 Momik vardapet, 219, 327
 Moses (biblical prophet), 75, 79, 92, 101, 107, 132, 246
 Movakan (son of Torgom), 541
 Movses Daskhurantsi, 164
 Movses Kaghankatvatsi, 73, 99, 164-68, 563-64
 Movses Kertogh, 83, 368
 Movses Khorenatsi, 20, 28, 31, 37-41, 43-52, 55-56, 58, 60-61, 63, 67, 73-74, 77, 84, 93-95, 100, 102, 105, 109, 115, 126-27, 133, 139-58, 168, 173, 180, 186-88, 190, 206, 224-26, 240, 275-76, 279-80, 286, 290, 309, 332-33, 335, 354, 364, 458-59, 462, 486, 529-30, 535, 537, 542-44, 546, 548, 554-56, 558-62

- Mserian, Mser, 564
 Mshak (Armenian legendary figure), 44
 Msra Melik (epic figure), 287-89, 292, 294, 297
 Müller, Freidrich, 23, 545
 Muradian, Arusiak, 550
 Muradian, Paruir, 600
 Muratsan, 456
 Musa (Arab governor of Armenia), 289
 Mush (fictional figure), 576
 Mushe Taronetsi, 78
 Mushegh Mamikonian (commander), 64, 116, 122, 163, 168, 291
 Musset, Alfred de, 407
 Mutanabbi, al-, 572
 Muyldermans, Joseph, 571

 Nadir (shah of Persia), 509
 Naghash Hovnatan, 358, 363, 420, 441, 450-51, 453, 461, 486, 489-97, 505, 509-10, 513-14, 599
 Nahapet (master), 469
 Nahapet Giulnazarian Aguletsi, 459
 Nahapet Kuchak, 469-71, 474-75, 485, 495, 589-90, 597-99
 Nalbandian, Mikayel, 558
 Nane [Athena] (Armenian goddess), 32, 34
 Napoleon Bonaparte, 527
 Naram-Sin (Akkadian king), 20
 Nasimi, 509
 Nazarian, Shushanik, 522, 575, 597, 601
 Nebrovt [Nimrod], *see* Bel
 Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian king), 182, 300
 Nemesius of Emesa, 85, 569
 Nergal (Hittite deity), 541
 Nerseh (Assyrian hagiographical figure), 100, 307
 Nerses I [Partev] the Great (Catholicos), 91, 94-95, 97, 116-18, 122, 151, 306, 348, 553
 Nerses III Shinogh (Catholicos), 162, 168, 179
 Nerses Lambronatsi, 180, 197, 206-08, 217, 234, 238, 265, 281, 305, 307, 361, 529, 565, 567-68
 Nerses Mokatsi, 441, 445, 451, 578
 Nerses Mshetsi, 327
 Nerses Palianents, 325
 Nerses Shnorhali (Catholicos), 80, 123, 139, 179, 182, 185, 191, 196-206, 208, 212, 217, 223, 238, 264-81, 303-04, 311, 333-38, 353, 361, 363, 365-66, 368, 443, 469, 473, 521, 530, 565, 567-69, 572, 574-75, 578, 583
 Nersisian, Varag, 587, 591
 Nestor (Patriarch), 544, 554
 Neumann, Frederic Karl, 530, 550
 Nève, Félix, 233, 267, 551, 571, 574
 Niadia (Indian goddess), 33
 Nicholas of Lyra, 323
 Nichomachus, 235
 Niit (Egyptian goddess), 33
 Nikoghayos Stampoltsi, 442
 Nikolaos of Myra [the Sophist], 83
 Nikolovski, Mikhail V., 27
 Nimrod [Nebrovt], *see* Bel
 Ninos (Assyrian deity), 44
 Niukar Mades (deity of Media), 44
 Nizami Gianjaev, 340
 Noah the Patriarch (biblical figure), 80, 91, 102, 132, 143
 Nonnus (martyr), 86, 551
 Norman, Joseph, 536
 Nshanian, M., 596
 Nune (saint), 109

 Ogostinos Bajetsi, 455, 596
 Olympian, 82, 308
 Olympiodoros [the Junior], 173
 Olympiodorus, 84
 Olympius, 31, 145
 Omar Khayyam, 474, 491
 Orbeli, Hovsep A., 27, 283, 309, 579
 Orbeliani, Grigol, 512

- Orbelians, 327, 330
 Oribazis, 569
 Orion (Greek mythological figure), 540
 Ormanian, Maghakia, 194, 324, 328, 544, 559, 567, 581-82, 592
 Ormizd, *see* Ahura Mazda
 Oshin (prince), 568
 Oudenrijn, M. A. von den, 580-81
 Ovid, 533

 Paghtasar Dpir, 363, 513-18, 521-22, 528, 601
 Pahlavunis, 221, 266, 275, 304, 595
 Palasanian, Grigor, 297
 Palasanian, Stepan, 539-40, 559, 562
 Palatetsi, Georg, 533
 Pankratios [Bagrat], 175
 Pap (king of Armenia), 63-64, 115-17, 119, 122, 291
 Papazian, Hakob, 547
 Pappus of Alexandria, 86
 Parandzem (queen of Armenia), 39, 64, 116, 121, 150
 Parsumian, Nerses, 578
 Paruir Haikazn [Prohaeresius], 171
 Pasiphae (Greek mythological figure), 55
 Patkanian, Gabriel, 139
 Patkanian, Kerovpe, 161, 164, 595
 Patkanian, Raphayel, 139, 357
 Paul (Apostle), 140, 193, 581
 Paul of Alexandria, 86
 Paul I (Russian tsar), 440
 Paulitians, 205, 220
 Paulus Piromalli, 460
 Pavstos Buzand, 37-38, 63-64, 67, 93-95, 102, 105, 114-24, 131, 133, 144-45, 147, 150, 157, 168, 309, 332, 347, 452, 553, 556-57
 Payapis Kaaghia (Cappadocian mythological titan), 44
 Pepinos Frank, 77
 Perikhanian, A. G., 537
 Peshiktashlian, Mkrtich, 357
 Peshtmalchian, Grigor, 529
 Peter (Apostle), 140, 193, 581
 Peter of Alexandria, 92
 Peter of Aragon, 325
 Peter I (Russian tsar), 440
 Peter Mongos, 87
 Petermann, Heinrich, 23, 233, 530, 571
 Petrarch, 407
 Petros Getadardz (Catholicos), 180, 191, 195-96
 Petros Ghapantsi, 357, 363, 513-14, 517-22
 Petros Kahana, 346
 Petros Latinatsi, 526
 Petros Siunetsi, 85
 Phaedrus, 222
 Philo of Alexandria [Judaesus], 84, 87, 145, 235, 328, 531
 Photius (Patriarch), 175
 Pivazian, Emmanuel, 470, 580, 592
 Plato, 85, 145, 174, 222-23, 307
 Plautius, 533
 Plutarch, 29, 30
 Polycrates, 145
 Polyphemus (cyclops), 47
 Pontios Boniface [Fra], 323
 Pope Clement V, 219
 Pope Eugene III, 586
 Pope Innocent XVIII, 453
 Pope John XXII, 322
 Pope Nicholas V, 586
 Pope Sylvester (the Roman), 93, 142, 145, 585
 Porphyry of Phoenicia, 84, 87, 145, 174, 328
 Poturian, Mkrtich, 584, 590, 593, 595
 Priscianus of Caesarea, 582
 Proclus of Constantinople, 80, 459
 Proclus Diadochus, 307
 Prometheus (Greek mythological figure), 60, 146
 Pronian, Sahak, 532
 Prosh (Lord), 339
 Proshians, 338

- Prud'homme, Evariste, 570
 Pseudo-Aristotle, *see* Aristotle
 Pseudo-Callisthenes, *see* Callisthenes of Olynth
 Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, 85, 459
 Pseudo-Sebeos, 161
 Ptolemy, 174, 340
 Pythagoras, 174, 235, 533

 Rachel (biblical figure), 339
 Raffi, 121, 123
 Raphael (painter), 243
 Rawlinson, G., 536
 Renan, Joseph Ernst, 551
 Rhea (Roman goddess), 285
 Robertson, William, 533
 Roger Bacon, 236
 Roland (French epic figure), 294
 Rollin, Charles, 30, 533, 538
 Romanos (singer), 206
 Romulus and Remus (Roman legendary figures), 286
 Ronsard, Pierre, 407
 Rosen, Victor, 550
 Rostom [Rostam Zal] (Iranian epic figure), 146, 285, 354, 499, 509
 Rubens, 243
 Rubinian kingdom, 217, 232, 234
 Rumani (troubadour), 599
 Runciman, Steven, 233, 571
 Rusa I (king of Urartu), 27-28
 Russell, James R., 573

 Saadi, 379, 389, 474
 Sadun (prince), 339
 Sahak (hagiographical figure), 97, 99, 303
 Sahak Bagratuni (prince), 141, 144, 146, 149
 Sahak Dzoraporetsi (Catholicos), 180, 191-93
 Sahak Mamikonian (Armenian commander), 162
 Sahak Partev (Catholicos), 74, 76-79, 81, 97, 106, 124, 127, 140, 151-53, 178, 180-82, 186, 190, 204, 209, 306, 364, 545, 547, 549, 553, 559
 Sahakdukht, 194
 Sahakian, Hasmik, 595
 Saint-Martin, Antoine J. de, 530, 556, 579
 St. George, 68
 St. Karapet, 169
 St. Sargis, 292, 307
 Saladin (Muslim conqueror), 335
 Samuel (biblical prophet), 92
 Samuel Anetsi, 223
 Samuel Skevratsi, 305
 Samuelian, Thomas, 570
 Sanasar (epic figure), 284-86, 291, 293, 295, 576
 Sanatruk (king of Armenia), 54-56, 95, 144, 543
 Sandukht (saint), 94-95, 98, 195, 543, 553
 Sanot (nursery of Sanatruk), 54
 Sara (mother of Sayat-Nova), 498
 Sara (daughter of Sayat-Nova), 499
 Saranyu (Indian mythological figure), 285
 Sarduri (king of Urartu), 27
 Sargis Kaghzvantsi, 300
 Sargis Pitzak, 218-19
 Sargisian, Barsegh, 552, 555, 568
 Sargisian, G., 577
 Sargsian, Gagik, 560
 Sarkavag Berdakatsi, 450
 Sarkissian, Karekin (Vardapet; later, Catholicos), 206, 544, 568
 Sasuni, Karo 283, 371, 588
 Satenik (legendary figure), 39, 41, 56-58, 61
 Sayat-Nova [Arutin, Ter Stepanos], 280, 461, 486, 488, 490, 493, 495, 497-514, 516, 599-600
 Sayce, Archibald, 26
 Scamadros, 145

- Schiller, 301
 Schröder, Johan Joachim, 360, 458-59, 530, 587
 Shtacelberg, R., 35
 Sebeos [Sebius, Eusebius], 37, 43, 63, 128, 158, 160-64, 168, 562-63
 Seneca, 533
 Sennacherib [Senekerim] (Assyrian king), 286
 Serebriakov, D. 460
 Seth (biblical figure), 92
 Sevak, Paruir, 470, 597, 600
 Shaghita (Assyrian hagiographical figure), 93, 118
 Shahamir Shahamirian, 523-24
 Shahaziz, 139
 Shahkhatunian, Hovhannes, 563
 Shahnazariants, Karapet, 563, 565, 582
 Shahsuvarian, Albert, 591
 Shakespeare, 255
 Shamchi Melkon (troubadour), 488, 599
 Shamiram [Semiramis] (Assyrian legendary queen), 32, 45-47, 561
 Shanidze, Akaki, 546
 Shapi (epic figure), 291
 Shapuh Bagratuni, 223-24, 232, 569
 Shapuh II [Shahpur] (king of Persia), 64, 70, 119-22, 151, 291
 Shapuh III [Shahpur] (king of Persia), 156-57
 Shirin (queen of Persia), 163, 509
 Shirin (troubadour), 599
 Shivini (Uartian deity), 28
 Shmona (Assyrian hagiographical figure), 93, 109
 Shmuel (Catholicos), 69
 Shnitser, Ya. B., 545
 Shushanik Mamikonian (martyr), 95, 98
 Siarnanto, 598
 Sigismund I (king of Poland), 310
 Simeon Aparanetsi, 164, 441-43, 563, 595
 Simeon Hayetsi, 453
 Simeon Jughayetsi, 84, 447
 Simeon Kafayetsi, 450
 Simeon Lehatsi, 447, 453-54, 596
 Simeon Metaphrastes, 302
 Simeon Pghndzahanetsi, 307
 Simeon Yerevantsi, 514, 517-18
 Simonian, Hasmik, 583-84
 Simonian, Simon, 601
 Siurmelian, Khachatur, 529, 532
 Skandari Zulgharii, *see* Alexander of Macedonia
 Smbat Bagratuni (legendary prince), 55-56
 Smbat Bagratuni (knight), 155
 Smbat Bagratuni (prince), 162-63
 Smbat I (king of Armenia), 224
 Smbat Mamikonian (commander), 169
 Smbat Sparapet (Constable), 217, 233-34, 310
 Smbat Zarehavantsi (Tondrakite), 220
 Socrates, 142, 145
 Solomon [the Wise] (biblical king), 26, 75, 79, 181, 246, 265, 300, 332, 335, 398, 410
 Somalian, Sukias, 564, 585
 Spandiar (Iranian fictional figure), 354
 Srapian, Armenuhi, 576-77, 588, 590
 Srvandztiants, Garegin (bishop), 139, 282, 539, 588, 595-96
 Stepane, Khoren, 561
 Stepanos (hagiographer), 99
 Stepanos Agonts, 601
 Stepanos Dashtetsi, 450, 521, 601
 Stepanos Lehatsi, 85, 459
 Stepanos Manuk, 266
 Stepanos Orbelian, 280, 330, 333, 337-39, 582-83
 Stepanos Roshka, 306
 Stepanos Siunetsi, 83, 85, 99, 172, 178-80, 191, 193-94, 304
 Stepanos Skevratsi, 304
 Stepanos Taronetsi [Asoghik], 78, 163, 221, 223-24, 232, 309, 368, 563

- Stepanos Tokhatetsi, 442-43
 Stepanos Varagetsi, 448
 Stepanos vardapet, 346
 Stephen (martyr), 193
 Stone, Michael, 570
 Strabo, 20-21, 33
 Sukias, 450
 Surenians, Vartkes, 47
 Surmak Yerets (Catholics), 559
 Surmelian, Leon, 576
- Tachat Gntuni (hero of Avarair), 139
 Tadevosian, Marat, 601
 Taghiadian, Mesrop, 522
 Tahmasp (shah of Persia), 420
 Tahmizian, Nikoghos, 201, 206, 567-68
 Talian, Shara, 600
 Tamrazian, Hrant, 125, 148, 557-58, 560, 562
 Tarku [Turgu] (Hittite deity), 47
 Tarun (fictional figure), 576
 Tashian, Hakobos, 537, 540, 550-52, 555-57, 560, 580, 583-84
 Tatian, 548
 Teisheba (Uartian deity), 28
 Teodoros Kesaratsi, 305
 Teodoros Krtenavor, 160
 Teodoros Mopsvestatsi, 545
 Teodoros Rshtuni (Armenian prince), 162-63, 170, 289
 Ter Minasian, Yervand, 128, 551, 558-59, 569
 Ter-Davtian, Knarik, 552, 577-78
 Ter-Ghevondian, Aram, 553, 555-56, 565
 Ter-Israyel, 303
 Ter-Mikelian, A., 543
 Ter-Mkrtchian, Galust, 552, 555-56
 Ter-Movsesian, Mesrop, 585
 Ter-Petrosiants, Minas, 570
 Terentianos (general), 543
 Terzian, Nahapet, 459
 Teteyian, Kh., 569
 Tevatoros (epic figure), 287
- Tevkants, Aristakes, 469, 592, 596
 Thadeus [Adde] (Apostle), 67, 94-95, 98, 115, 145, 543, 553, 557, 581
 Thammuz (mythological figure), 45
 Theodosius (Byzantine emperor), 76
 Theon of Alexandria, 83, 550
 Theophanes [the Confessor], 232
 Thomas (Apostle), 92
 Thomas à Kempis, 459, 533
 Thomas Aquinas, 89, 323-25, 459, 533
 Thomson, Robert W., 128, 131, 542, 556, 558-62, 570-71
 Tigran (Armenian legendary king), 40-41, 143, 291
 Tigran I [the Great] (king of Armenia), 48, 50-53, 542, 559
 Tigran II [the Great] (king of Armenia), 21, 30-31, 50, 53, 144, 336
 Tigranuhi (legendary figure), 51-53, 61
 Tillemont, L. de, 550
 Timothy Aelurus of Alexandria, 87, 92, 100, 554
 Timur Lenk (Turkic conqueror), 294, 321, 328, 330, 509
 Tir (Armenian deity), 32, 34, 538
 Tirair (Melik Mushkambarians, archbishop), 589
 Tiran (king of Armenia), 63, 115-16, 144
 Tirit (prince), 150
 Tiroyian, Atanes, 587
 Titian, 243
 Tolstoy, Alexei, 301
 Tomasian, G. A., 558
 Tommazzeo, N., 561
 Tondrakites [Tondrakians], 205, 220-21, 228-29, 240
 Torgom (Caucasian patriarch), 345, 541
 Torgomian, Vahram, 596
 Tork Angegh [the Ugly] (Armenian legendary figure), 32, 47-48, 54, 146
 Tornik, 300

- Toros [keri] (epic figure), 287, 293-95
 Toros Roslin, 218-19
 Toros Taronatsi, 219, 327
 Torosian, Khosrov, 563, 579
 Torosian, Y., 593, 597
 Torquato Tasso, 279, 389
 Tournebize, F., 580
 Tovma Artzruni, 128, 163, 223, 226-27, 289, 309, 563, 570
 Tovma Metzopetsi, 304, 327-28, 330, 414
 Tovmachan, Yeghia, 523, 538
 Tovmas Vanandetsi (bishop), 142
 Trdat I (king of Armenia), 112
 Trdat II (king of Armenia), 112
 Trdat III [the Great] (legendary figure and king of Armenia), 63-64, 66-68, 96, 98, 108, 110-13, 116, 144, 151, 169, 203-04, 275, 300, 336, 345, 348, 351, 544, 585
 Trever, Kamilla, 35
 Tumanian, Hovhannes, 297, 301, 320, 512, 600
 Tychikos, 174
 Typhon (Cappadocian mythological titan), 44-45
 Tzovinar (mythological-epic figure), 32, 284-86, 293-95

 Ukhtanes, 224, 563
 Unitores, 304, 306, 322-26, 528, 580-81, 602
 Urnair (king of Albania), 122, 165

 Vache II (king of Albania), 164
 Vache Mamikonian (Armenian general), 116, 291
 Vagharshak (king of Armenia), 144, 561
 Vagharshian, Vagharsh, 297
 Vahagn [Dragonslayer] (Armenian deity), 32, 39-40, 48-50, 52, 61, 68, 110, 143, 146
 Vahan Amaduni (Armenian commander), 76
 Vahan Gnuni (hero of Avarair), 139
 Vahan Goghtnatsi (martyr), 95-96, 99, 194, 553
 Vahan Mamikonian (prince), 122
 Vahan Mamikonian (Armenian commander), 69, 123-25, 163
 Vahram Mihrevandak (Persian general), 163
 Vahram Pahlavuni (Armenian prince), 233
 Vahram Rabuni, 217, 281, 326
 Vahrich, 74
 Vakidi, el-, 576
 Vanakan Vardapet, 234, 541
 Vanandetsis (Matteos and Ghukas), 458-59, 532
 Varazdat (king of Armenia), 63, 115, 117
 Varazvaghan (apostate), 126
 Vard Patrik, 300
 Vardan Aigektsi, 217, 309, 314-20, 452, 458, 580
 Vardan Areveltsi [Gandzaketsi], 164, 179, 209, 234-35, 281, 306, 553, 563
 Vardan Baghishetsi, 346, 455, 563
 Vardan Bardzrberdtsi (Catholicos), 218
 Vardan Mamikonian (Armenian commander), 97-98, 125, 127, 130, 134-135, 139, 203
 Vardan vardapet, 456
 Vardanants Heroes (martyrs), 136-39, 204
 Vardanian, Aristakes, 547, 550
 Vardges Manuk (Armenian legendary figure), 41, 50-51
 Vasak Mamikonian (Armenian commander), 116, 121, 122
 Vasak Siuni (Armenian prince), 125-126, 134-36
 Vazgen (husband of Shushanik Mamikonian), 98
 Velesh, Egon, 569

- Veretragna (Iranian mythological figure), 50
 Vergo (epic figure), 285-86, 294-95
 Vest Sargis (Armenian prince), 228
 Vetter, Paul, 540
 Villefroy, Gulielmus, 266, 530
 Virgil, 342, 533
 Voguhi (sister of Sanatruk), 543
 Voltaire, 301
 Vorberian, Ruben, 365, 588
 Voskan Yerevantsi, 315, 457-58, 526, 548, 573
 Voskiant, 95, 195
 Vram (king of Persia), 152-53
 Vramshapuh (king of Armenia), 74-76, 156
 Vrtanes (Catholikos), 91, 94, 117, 119
 Vrtanes Sernketsi, 441
 Vulcan (Roman deity), 34

 Wakhtang VI (king of Georgia), 310, 490
 Wesley, Charles, 206
 Whiston, George and William, 458, 530, 561
 Windischmann, Friedrich, 23, 35, 530
 Wolohojian, Albert M., 583

 Xenophon, 20, 25, 51, 536, 542

 Yazkert I (king of Persia), 156
 Yazkert II (king of Persia), 125, 127, 130-31, 134-35, 161, 204
 Yeganian, Onnik, 597
 Yeghishe (Elishê), 84, 93, 102, 105, 126, 140, 170, 173, 180, 224-26, 279, 306, 558-59
 Yeghivard [Yeghishe vardapet], 255, 573
 Yegros (son of Torgom), 541
 Yepipan [Epiphanius] (Assyrian hagiographical figure), 93
 Yeremia Chelepi Keomiurchian, 348, 450, 455-56, 459, 586, 596
 Yermanian, Suren, 20, 536

 Yerevantsi, Margar, 533
 Yervand (legendary king of Armenia), 39-41, 54-56
 Yervand I Sakavakiats (king of Armenia), 24, 50-51
 Yervand IV (king of Armenia), 31, 144
 Yervandunis, 21, 30, 48, 50
 Yervaz (Armenian legendary figure), 39-40
 Yesayi Nchetsi, 83, 324, 327
 Yezidbuzid (hagiographical figure), 99, 303
 Yeznik Koghbatsi, 60, 78, 79, 81, 100, 172-73, 551, 565
 Yusuf (Arab governor of Armenia), 224, 289
 Yervaz (Armenian legendary figure)

 Zakare Zakarian (prince), 310
 Zakaria Aguletsi, 455
 Zakaria Gnunetsi [Gnuniants], 341, 420
 Zakaria Sarkavag [Kanakertsi], 455-56
 Zakaria Tzortzoretsi (bishop), 323
 Zakarians, 217, 310, 330
 Zaminian, Abraham, 129, 142, 543, 545, 593
 Zangi (Arab emir), 275, 278
 Zarbhanalian, Garegin, 532, 543, 549, 552, 556, 559, 564, 577, 580, 584, 588
 Zarian, Nayiri, 47, 297
 Zaruhi (wife of king Tigran), 52, 542
 Zarvand (fictional figure), 576
 Zeno the Stoic, 84, 87
 Zenob Glak, 168, 564
 Zeus (Greek deity), 32, 44
 Zhamgochian, Hakob, 589
 Zohrap, Grigor, 598
 Zohrapian, Hovhannes, 548
 Zorian, Stepan, 121, 123